THE RVLE
OF PENANCE
OF THE
SERAPHICALL FATHER
S. FRANCIS.

Approued and confirmed by Leo the X. for Religious Persons of the 3. Order of S. Francis.

Together with a Declaration of each point of the Rule, profitable not only to the Religious of this Order, but also to all Religious women.

By Br ANGELVS FRANCIS
Friar Minour.

THE FIRST PART.

AT DOVAY,
By the Widdow of MARKE VVYON,
M. D C. X L I V.

TO THE RIGHT

R. FATHER

B^r. IOHN GENNINGS

FIRST PROVINCIALL

AND

RESTORER

Of the English Prouince of Friar Minours: and now actuall Prouinciall of the same.

REV. FATHER.

Sithence the common practise of writers hath now so prevailed, that each one almost, either, for patro-

nage of their workes, or to manifest their respects, Dutie, and Gratitude, is accustomed, to present them, vnder the shelter of such persons, who by their acceptance may equalise their labours and paines; I hope it will not seeme strange to your R. Paternitie, or to any other; that I haue made choise to present my poore industries, to you; who in all respects may challenge, vnder God, the vtmost of my endeauours; Nay I should offend, if I should attribute the Patronage of this little worke to any, but to you R. Father, who first desired it, and by whose commands I haue vndertaken it.

Beſides if vertuous actions may allure me: I know not where, within your ranke and qualitie, to paralell your heroique deeds: for to omit your progenie; which may adde a probabilite of a vertuous minde: as Ariſtotle ſaith. 3. Pol: Veriſimile eſt præſtantiores ac meliores eſſe eos, qui ex melioribus. *and to ſpeake nothing of the happineſſe you enioy, by being Brother to ſo Glorious a Martyr* M. Edmõd Gennings: *as alſo of your miraculous conuerſion, of your continuall labours, for many yeares in Gods vineyard, for the conuerſion of ſoules: your praiſe and merit, both before*

God and man, hath taken no small degree, in your erecting or rather restoring againe, that sometimes famous Province of the English Friar Minours; wherein haue bene in all sciences, some of the most renowned and learned men of Christendome. Of this Province was Alexander Hales, who was called Doctor Doctorum and was the first that euer did write Summe of Diuinitie. of this Province was Scotus, whose fame is spread thorough the whole world, both for his sublime subtilitie, and more than vulgar deuotion to our B. Lady: what shall I reckon vp, Occham, Bachon, Midleton

with infinite others; who haue embelished Gods Church with their Doctrine: and strenuously defended it against heresies: to which we may adde; that of three schooles from whence all others almost, deriue their doctrine, to wit, of Thomists, Scotists, and Nominalists: two of them haue had their beginning from men of this Prouince. Is it not R. Father a great glorie to you, that notwithstanding the violent impetuositie of these our times; God should vse you as an instrument, to make this renowned Prouince to reviue againe, in our order? but I am confident, greater is your ioy, to see and heare the

fruicts of your labours; for we may well say of this seeming shrubbe, which you haue planted: that it is tanquam lignum, quod plantatum est iœcus decursus aquarum: quod fructum suum dabit in tempore suo. *It is like vnto a Tree planted by the water side, which bringeth forth fruict in due season: for this your tree, was no sooner planted: but it beganne to sprout forth leaues of rare examples; its root was scarse setled in the ground, but its branches loaded with pietie, deuotion and learning did extend themselues to the gayning of soules; as soone as the waters of grace had wate-*

red

red it, the heavens did receiue it swiftly: I meane amongst others, those glorious Martyrs who for Gods honour, and for his Church, haue lately giuen their liues in sacrifice; of whom according to the breuitie of an Epistle: I will speake a word or two.

Father Thomas Bullaker vpon his arriuall into England being taken and emprisoned, cõtracted such diseases, through miserie and want, which he suffered in prison; that he neuer had his health after: yet: the zeale of soules, which brought him vnto his country; forced him with vndaunted courage to come to london, in the greatest

rage

rage of Perſecution, to helpe the poore diſtreſſed Catholiques: which he did both ſpiritually and temporally; vntill ſuch time, that being taken at Maſſe, whilſt he was ſaying Gloria in Excelſis: *he was empriſoned againe, condemned, hanged, drawne and quartered, when his ſoule did aſcend to ſing eternally a canticle of Ioy in heauen.*

Father Paule *of* S. Magdalen *alias* Henry Heath, *twiſe Guardian of your Conuent at Douay, and once Commiſſarie Prouinciall in theſe parts, and long ſince Reader of Diuinitie: after hauing well profited in his ſtudies in Cambridge; by*

reading

reading of the holy Fathers, and disputing with others; he was the occasion of the conversion of many, whereof some became Religious: and after God touching his heart, he did reconcile himselfe vnto the Catholicke church, and comming beyond seas to Douay he entred into the order of our holy Father S. Francis: and therein liued with so great austeritie, that indeede it was more to be admired than imitated: for to omit his bloudy disciplines, wherewith most parts of the house are marked: his lying on the ground continually: his haire-cloaths of of seuerall sorts; his chaines,

girdells.

girdells, and bracelets of Iron: his life was in a manner, à continuall faſt; for long time together, vntill Obedience commanded the cõtrary, he did take nothing but bread and ſmall drinke; vnleſſe it were once or twiſe à weeke; and then in ſuch manner, that if he could, he would put ashes or duſt into it: but aboue all; it is to be admired, how piouſly he ſpent his time; for you ſhould neuer find him, but either at his ſtudy, or elſe in vocall or mentall prayer; and to talke with him of other matters, was out of his element: and notwithſtanding that alwayes he was imployed in exteriour offices of the houſe;

Reading

Reading both Diuinitie, and Philosophie, hearing confessions; visiting the sicke, especially the poore: sometimes till 10. 11. *or* 12. *a clocke at night: yet scarce would he be absent from the Quire at midnight; or any other office of the Quire at any time: In fine none can better expresse his great desire of gaining soules, and obtayning martyrdome; than he himselfe who felt the burning fire of his Zeale, which he hath manifested in his owne writings; which in time conuenient shalbe put to the presse: briefly, he was singular in his austeritie; rare in his pietie, excessiue in his Zeale, most*

humble

humble in his owne conceit: yet as learned in the eies of all that knew him. I cannot let passe the last passage, which I and many more did marke in him: that although he was much retired, and seldome discourſed of any thing, vnleſſe he were vrged, for that he tooke no content in company: yet at the time when he had gotten leaue to goe into England; he was ſo much altered, and changed, as if he had bene another man, or as one who was not able to cõtaine his ioy, but in actions, voice ad countenãce one might iudge what his heart poſſeſſed: and ſo after a moſt auſtere, penitentiall,

tiall, and humble life; much admired, esteemed and honoured of all: he did offer vp a voluntarie sacrifice of his life for Gods cause; that he might reape an eternall crowne in heauen; which as we piously belieue, and may gather out of his owne writings; he obtained by the mediation of our B. Lady: to whom he was singularly deuoted, and from whom he had receiued many fauours.

Of Father Francis Bell (who was formerly Confessour to your Religious women of the third Order, Guardian of your Conuent aforesaid, and Prouinciall of Scotland: and a

little

little before his death againe elected Guardian of your said Convent of Douay) I neede say no more than, what each one that knew him would say, that he was a true Franciſcan, *or* child of our holy Father S. Francis, *& that conſequẽtly he was fitting fuell, to ſatisfie the burning rage of Gods enemies: and to make a pleaſant holocauſt to God, by ſacrificing his life for his ſake. Here I may apply the example of that famous Captaine* Epimanondas, *who did not ſo much glory in his great victories, as that his parents, from whom he had his being, did take pleaſure and content therein: as*

Plutarch

Plutarch reporteth. I for my part (and I beliеue ſuch is the opinion of all your children whom you haue begotten in Chriſt Ieſus) doe not ſo much rejoice for the great glorie that redounds to our Prouince hereby; as that you the Father of vs all, with pleaſure and content haue ſeene the fruict of your labours,

If Dutie may challenge it, ſure it muſt be yours by all right: for whatſoeuer we doe, is yours: you R. Father being our firſt Father, and vnder God the ſole beginner and worker of our being in this happy ſtate of Religion: for if Vliſſes was iudged to haue right to the

Armour

Armour of Achilles, because he was the occasion of his comming to the wars of Troy, surely you may challenge whatsoeuer act praise-worthy may be performed by any of vs: and therfore if any haue deserued praise, in labouring for the conuersion of soules, in teaching & instructing others, in writing, in vertuous examples or any other heroicke acts, they are yours; and are but so many additions to your Glorie.

If gratitude for benefits receiued may moue me: who can better deserue it, than your R. Paternitie? who by your labour haue sustained, maintai-

ned, and conſerued vs for diuers yeares: truly if we proue vngratfull, euen the very wals of your two erected Conuents will crie shame on vs, and giue teſtimonie of our ingratitude. Now although each of vs haue this generall obligation: yet in a more particular manner, muſt I acknowledge it; and therfore most willingly doe I offer this, and all my labours as yours by all right and duty: wherfore it reſteth only that you vouchſafe R. F. to patronize and accept of this expoſition of the Rule (which Pope Leo the tenth hath accomated for Religious perſons of the third Order of our holy

Father

Father S. Francis) *which I haue made and composed for your Religious daughters of that Order, now residing at Neuport: whose Religious Simplicitie, prompt Obediẽce, peace full Amitie, and regular Obseruance, may crowne your old age with joy and content; which I pray, may alwayes continue both in this life and in the world to come Thus he wisheth who alwayes remaineth.*

RIGHT REV. FATHER.

Yourpoore Beadsman and vnworthy Child.

BL. ANGELVS FRANCIS.

To the Reader.



Haue thought good to aduertiſe thee, that in the beginning, I intended to haue ioyned both parts of this booke in one volumne: but finding the latter part, to grow greater than I expected; I was forced to divide them into two bookes, and becauſe the firſt part was ſomewhat diſproportionable to the other, by adviſe of ſome of my Friends, I haue differred hitherto the ſetting forth of this firſt part, and added

some other things: which although they concerne not the subiect I was to handle, I meane the exposition of the Rule; yet they conduce to the practise thereof, as also may supply the want of the formes and manner of cloathing, Professing, annealing of the Religious, so that hereby vniformitie may be observed, and the Confessours find most things that are necessary in this kind: I hope all will take it in good part, and excuse the Inevitable errours committed in the print, which among strangers can hardly be avoided.

F. Gear-

APPROBATIONES

F. Georgius à S. Guliclmo Provinciæ Angliæ in ordine FF. Minorum Prouincialis: R. P. F. Angelo à S. Franciſco meo Commiſſario in partibus Belgicis, & S. Th. Lectori.

CVm ad inſtantiam R. admodum Patris F. Ioannis Gennings Provinciæ noſtræ Patris: & Monialium noſtrarum Tertij Ordinis S. P. N. Franciſci Neoporti reſidentium lucubrationes aliquas ad pleniorem Regulæ ipſarum Declarationem mediteris: in merito S. Obedientię tibi iniungo, & his præſentibus Licentiam do: quatenus prius obſervatis ijs, quæ in Concilio Tridentino circa impreſſionem librorum ordinantur: eas quantocius prælo commendas. Datum Londini Hac 22. Ianuarij Ann. 1642.

LEgi librum, cuius titulus est. *The third Rule Off. S. Francis, as it is accommodated for Religious Persons.* Ab admodum Reuerendo patre, Fr. Angelo à S. Francisco, S. Thologiæ Lectore, & Recollectorum Ordinis eiusdem S. Francisci, Pouincię Anglicanæ Commissario compositum; in quo, nihil inueni, fidei Catholicæ, vel bonis moribus contrarium; sed plurima, cum magna eruditione tradita, quæ illis, pro quibus scriptus est, in bonum cedent. Duaci, in Collegio S. Gregorij. 15. Decembris 1644.

F. BVDESINDVS BARLO
S. Theologiæ Doctor, & Professor in Collegio Vedastino Duaceno.

R. Admodum P. F. Angelus à S. Franciſco S. T. Lector, & Recollectorum Provinciæ Anglicanæ Commiſſarius, qui iam pridem de Tertia regula S. Franciſci alio volumine bene meruit, novas elucubrationes in eandem regulam, vt iuſtis ſuorum deſideriis ſatisfaciat, patrio idiomate prælo offert: quas cum diligenter evoluiſſem, iudicavi non modò per omnia ſanè fidei & bonis moribus conſonas, ſed inſuper viſę mihi ſunt vbique redolere ſpiritum S. Franciſci verè pium, multaque inſignia, mira perſpicuitate, complecti, quæ magno cum fidelium commodo, eorum præſertim qui ſub auſpicijs Tertiæ regulæ deo ſunt militaturi, in lucem emitterentur. Datum Duaci in Collegio Anglorum Decembris 21. Anno Dom. 1644.

GVILIELMVS HYDÆVS
S. T. Profeſſor & Coll. ęq
Anglo Duacen. Vice-præſes

VIsis approbationibus Virorum eximiorum ac doctissimorum Sacræ Theologiæ Professorum, super libello anglicè scripto; cui titulus *The third &c.* Ego infrascriptus calculum addo, eundemque iudico dignum qui typis vulgetur, in bonum eorum quorum manibus teretur. Datum 22. Decemb. 1644.

VALENTINVS RANDOVR
S. Theol. Doctor & eiusdem regius ordinariusque Dunci Professor.



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EINIS.



THE PREFACE.

THe glorious Apoſtle S. Paule writing to the Epheſians cap. 4. would haue them to be careſull ſeruare vnitatem ſpiritus in vinculo pacis. to keepe vnitie of ſpirit, that is, mutuall charitie which proceeds frõ the holy Ghoſt,

in the bond of peace; which makes vs to be one body, and all members of one head Christ Iesus, by whom we become one spirit, each one liuing by one and the selfe same spirit which giueth to each spirituall life and motion, as we are called in one hope of our vocation to saluation, immortalitie and celestiall glorie. For to all there is vnus Dominus, vna fides, vnum baptisma *one lord, one faith, one baptisme: wherein all Ca-*

tho-

tholickes doe agree, and make vp that Church wherein alone is ſaluation, and which is one in three reſpects as Aluarus Pelagius *in his book of the Churches cõplaint* de planctu Eccl. l. 1. c. 63. *well noteth. Firſt the Church is one, ſaith he* vnitate totalitatis, *by vnitie of totalitie becauſe it is a whole body compacted of diuers parts which are the faithfull: ſecondly* vnitate conformitatis *by vnitie of conformity, becauſe in each*

part there is a kind of ſimi-
litude and cõformitie, to wit
in the gifts of grace, as in
faith, hope, charitie, and
good workes proceeding frõ
thẽ: thirdly vnitate attri-
butionis *by vnitie of attri-*
bution, for all the faith full
haue a reference to the ſame
end, which is ſaluation and
eternall bliſſe, by a certaine
attribution to Chriſt, who is
the head of all thoſe that are
to be ſaued.

Theſe three vnities are
aptly repreſented in the
afore-

aforesaid words. Vnum corpus *one body shewes the integritie of Gods church;* vnus spiritus *one spirit the thing wherein all the faithfull haue an assimilation and conformitie; and* vnus Dominus *one lord the principall and chiefe of all, whereto all haue attribution or respect. So that in the Catholicke church, and amongst all Catholicke beliewers there is one Faith, because one doctrine, from whence none without errour*

may ſwarue; one Hope, becauſe all haue the ſame end; one Charitie, which worketh in all; and conformably the ſelfe ſame precepts, ſacraments, and ſuch like without any difference or diſcord.

Now although ſuch be the vnitie or vnion of the Catholicke Church, yet we may find in it a three fold pleaſing diuerſitie, which the foreſaid Aluarus *alſo noted, The firſt is diuerſitie of degrees, ſome ſuperiour,*

ſome

some inferiour, which much conduceth to its dignitie and beauty; for as S. Bernard saith, Discretio virtuti ordinem ponit, ordo modum tribuit, & decorem & perpetuitatem. *Difference giues order to vertue, order giues measure, beauty and perpetuitie. The second is diuersitie of offices, according to the diuerse actions and functions of each one in the Church; And this the Apostle mentioneth Rom.*

12. habentes donationes ſecundum gratiam quę data eſt nobis differentes, *hauing different gifts according to the grace that is giuen vs. The third is diuerſitie of ſtates, as ſome are more perfect than others*, ſtella differt à ſtella in claritate Cor. 15. *one ſtarre differs from another in glory; ſome being incipients or beginners, ſome proficients, who haue made progreſſe in vertue, and others*

thers perfect, some in one thing, some in another, all which maketh for the greater embellishment of Gods Church. So *that we may well say with the Psalmist* Psal. 44. Astitit Regina à dextris tuis in vestitu deaurato, circundata varietate. *The Queene on thy right hand in golden rayment, compassed with varietie; that is, the Catholique Church stãdeth on the right hand of God who will*

alwayes by his mighte hand protect it, firme in faith, purified by tribulations and persecutions, as gold by fire; With variety of stars, as clergy, laity, and diuers sort of Religious orders.

Who although they be in the vnion of Gods Church, all of them being true members therof, hauing also conformitie with other members of the same in precepts, sacraments, and such like necessarie meanes

of

of ſaluation, as faith, hope, and charitie; yet by à ſpirituall emulation 1. Cor. 12. they purſue the better gifts, and deſire more perfectly to follow our ſauiour Chriſt Ieſus, according to the Rules which God hath ordayned for the greater beauty of his Church, which by diuerſitie of Rules and inſtitutiõs giues food for each palate, all tending to one and the ſelfe ſame end of making ſoules more perfect and plea-

ſing

ſing to God. Amongſt the reſt our holy Father S. Francis by the inſpiration of God hath ordayned three Rules. The two firſt haue bene explicated, declared, and expounded by very many: the third, as it was ordayned by our holy Father, hath not wanted expoſitors, but as it is appropriated to religious perſons, hath beene very little touched or handled. Wherfore for the greater ſatisfaction

ction of thoſe who do profeſſe, or hereafter may profeſſe this Rule, I haue endeauoured to explicate and expound it, aſwell by shewing its dignitie, as alſo by ſetting downe the ſpirituall ſenſe, profit, and vſe that our Religious may make of their Rule: which taske I haue deuided into two parts; In the firſt I ſet downe ſome particular queſtions for the better explication of the title and other

things

things that are to be ſuppo-ſed in the expoſition: In the ſecond I endeauour to lay open the true ſenſe and meaning of the Rule.

THE

THE FIRST PART

Wherein are made ſeveral diſcourſes and queſtions touching the Rule and profeſſours thereof, occaſion'd by the Preface which Pope Leo prefixt before this third Rule of S. Francis.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

What a Rule is.

THis queſtion ſhall firſt be declared aſwell for ſatisfaction of the curious Reader, as alſo for to lay a better foundation of the reſt that followeth.

loweth. Wherfore to beginne with the name, omitting the many ſenſes wherein this word *Rule* may be vſed; A Rule is an inſtrument, whereby one drawes a line in due meaſure and proportion, and by tranſlation or Metaphore is taken for *Breuis rerum præceptio* à briefe precept of things to be done; in generall defined *norma viuendi*, à forme or method of liuing. So *Hugo à ſãcto Victore* ſaith that *Regula eſt quæ normam rectè viuendi prabet*, a Rule is, that showeth the manner of liuing vprightly: *à Regẽdo* ſaith *Ven. Bede*, of ruling, or gouerning, becauſe it gouernes vs by teaching what we ought to shunne and auoid, as alſo what we ought to do, and practiſe. But more neare to our purpoſe, a Rule, which for diſtinction ſake we call à Religious Rule, is *Norma ſeu inſtitutio*

bene

bene viuendi, & iuxta illius præcepta in seruiendi Deo propter vitam æternam, a forme or institution of liuing well, and seruing God according to the precepts therof, for life eternall; or a forme of Religious life taken out of the Ghospell, and contayning Euangelicall counsels with approbation of the See Apostolicke.

Our seraphicall Doctour saith, that Rules are as lawes frō which the professours thereof according to their seuerall institutions may not swarue, and therefore anciently they were called Cannons or positiue lawes, whereby they were to be gouerned and directed. The fruit whereof is not small, for by such Rules deuout soules, as little infants doe learne to write, not with paper and inke, but in their hearts by inspiration and instinct of the holy Ghost,

who

who impresseth those heauenly characters of perfection, drawing a bond of eternall life, neuer to be cancelled or altered: by them as apprentises they learne the art of arts, to enrich their soules with celestiall treasures, and to nauigate or passe securely through the dangerous passage of this worlds miserie; to conclude, it serues them as a looking glasse, wherein they may see and behold how to adorne and decke their soules. For each Religious person ought to attend nothing more than to embellysh and enrich his soule with heroicall acts, and Euangelicall vertues propounded in his Rule. I would to God each one did as often cast their eie vpon the cleare glasse of their Rule (not composed of ashes, but of the marrow and principal substance of the Gospell,

pell, with approbation of the Church) as our worldly gallants and ladyes behold their moſt frequently-deceiuing mirrours.

The second Chapter.

Whence commeth it that there are ſo many Rules, ſince all be to obſerue the Euangelicall Counſels.

ALthough it be moſt certaine that thoſe would be moſt perfect that could obſerue all and ſeuerall the Euangelicall counſells, yet conſidering our humaine frailty, *non omnia poſſumus omnes*, all cannot doe all things, *nec omnis fert omnia tellus* one country yeelds one thing, another ſome other, none bleſſed with all

all: therefore hath God chalckt out vnto vs ſo many ſeuerall wayes, whereby we should tend to perfectiō, ſufficiēt, and poſſible for this mortall life. Neither doth God require at our hands, that we should obſerue to fulfill all things that he hath propounded vnto vs in the Goſpell, vnleſſe it be in a ready and prompt mind, to doe whatſoeuer shall be agreable to his holy will and pleaſure (which no ſtate of perfection can iuſtly exclude) but to ſome he giueth fiue talents, to ſome two, and to ſome one, deuiding his graces as he pleaſes, to each one meanes to traffique withall, & to make the good merchandiſe of life & glory celeſtiall: as it may be ſeene in all ages. For in the old law he gaue different rules or lawes to the leuites, and to the other tribes; In the new law he

preſcribes

preſcribes ſeuerall formes of life to men and woemen, to Bishops and prieſts, perfect and imperfect, rich and poore, king and ſouldier; and yet all tend to the ſame end. And what wonder thē, if according to the inſtinct of the holy Ghoſt ſome take one way, ſome another. The Euangelicall doctrine is a patterne for all, it is a garden full of various odoriferant flowers where each one may ſatisfie their deſires, a table richly ſpred wherein is foode for all ſorts. And in this appeares the immenſe goodneſſe of our lord. *Thomas Walden.* doth handle this point well and amongſt other things produces the Exāples of our Sauiour, and *S. Iohn Baptiſt*, both of differēt liues, and both tending to an eminent perfection; and concludes ſaying, he that to his owne praiſe and

for

for the beauty of the celeſtiall kingdome created the angelicall ſpirits in nine diſtinct orders or quires, according to their ſpecificall diuerſitie and diſtance of offices, hath adorned his militant Church with many and diſtinct offices according to the diuerſe profeſſions, and merits of thoſe that liue therein. *S. Bernard* maketh another compariſon ſaying, as in one heauen there are many manſions, ſo in one Church there are many orders; and as there be in one houſe diſtinctions of glory, ſo in the ſame ſpirit there are diuiſions and diſtinctions of graces. Finally as in a commonweale you may find all ſort of trades, aſwell for commoditie as for the greater content of this temporall life, ſo in like maner in the Church there are to be found diuerſitie of

Rules,

Rules; which brings great ſpirituall profit, and giues there to a beautifull adorning by the variety of ſo many ſpirituall exerciſes, which they practiſe, ſome in the actiue life, ſome in the contemplatiue, ſome one, ſome another. Which diuerſitie brings with it ſelfe another benefit, for that by this varietie and multitude of Rules, orders, and inſtitutes each one according to their inclination, diſpoſition, and abilitie may find the way of perfection more facile and pleaſing; for thoſe that are not proper for this ſpirituall excerciſe of contemplation or action, may be capable of another, as experience dayly teacheth.

The third Chapter.

Of the originall or beginning of Religious orders.

THis followes next in order to be declared. Concerning which, if we may belieue *Ioſephus* the Iew *l.* 2. *de bello Iud. c.* 7. we find that *Enos* grandchild to Adam did begin this ſtate of a religious life, and that he gaue certaine rules which his diſciples were to follow, thereby inſtituting à peculiar and more ſublime manner of worshipping God. Whence *Gen.* 4. it is ſaid, this man began to inuocate the name of our lord; which muſt needs be vnderſtood of ſome peculiar manner different from the reſt,

reſt, for without all doubt Adam, Abel, Heth and the reſt did inuocate our lord, but not after that ſpeciall ſort as Enos did, who was to giue a beginning to the monaſticall or religious life: and therefore *Gen.* 6. they were called the ſonnes of God. For they liued in mutuall loue and charitie hauing all things common, alſo in great pouertie and auſteritie, and they did weare a white habit for diſtinctiō ſake. *Philo* the Iew hath the ſame, ſaying that they were poore without any inheritance, mony, or commerce with any, they had no care or thought of any thing but of the ſeruice of God, they were chaſt all their liues, liuing in continuall mortification, obedient to thoſe that had care of them without contradiction, being readier to die than to faile therein. In all which, and

much more, which thoſe two ancient writers haue ſet downe we may ſee a true platforme of a Religious ſtate and monaſticall life.

But in after ages this inſtitute decaying, God raiſed another cõpany, which were called Nazarites, that is ſeparated or conſecrated to God, to whom *Num. 6.* he gaue certaine rules to be by them obſerued: which according to the expoſitors of that place repreſent the true ſtate of Religion. The like may be ſaid of the Rechabites *Ier.* 35. who had their beginning from Rechab, from whom they receiued a Rule which they moſt religiouſly obſerued, in ſo much that S. Hierome calles them fathers of the monkes and religious perſons.

If we come to the new law Chriſt himſelfe gaue rules to all Reli-

Religious perſons. *Mat.* 19. If thou will be perfect goe ſell all &c. The like is ſaid *Mar.* 10. vpon which words S. Bernard exclameth ſaying. Theſe are the words that haue perſuaded the cõtempt of the world through the whole world, and voluntary pouertie to all men, theſe are they that haue filled cloyſters with monkes, and deſarts with Anchorites. For in that chapter Chriſt propoundeth vnto vs the three eſſẽtiall vowes of Religiõ, the vow of chaſtitie in thoſe words *ſunt Eunuchi qui ſeipſos caſtrauerunt propter regnum cælorum*, there are Eunuches which haue gelded themſelues for the kingdome of heauen: the vow of pouerty, in thoſe words *goe and ſell* &c. the vow of obedience *veni ſequere me* come follow me: whereof who deſireth more may read the expoſitors of that place.

So that iustly we may say, that the first founder of our Religious and monasticall life was Christ himselfe, and all those who since that time haue begun that course of life haue drawne their Rules from him: for he hauing gathered together the twelue Apostles gaue them a Rule to obserue, admonishing them that if any one would be his disciple, he ought to resolue to abandon the world, and all that is in it, and which is more important, their owne proper will, saying that in this that they followed him, they should be knowne to be his true disciples. He shewed them the perfect forme of obediẽce, taught them humilitie, and exhorted them to patience, and willingly to endure tribulations and persecutions, he earnestly and continually commended vnto them po-

uerty

uerty of spirit, meekenesse, mercy, iustice, peace, cleannesse of heart, and sufferance for the kingdome of heauen, and finally left them his holy Gospell to obserue, yea and his owne life and practise for a patterne.

Frõ this Rule of rules all the anciẽt Fathers haue drawen the beginning of their Religious orders, and founded their three essentiall vowes. For this holy colledge of the disciples was a little conuent, because after they were receiued into his company, they went vp and downe with him, eat, and slept which him, calling him their lord and master, obeying him in all things, which manner of liuing the Apostles haue left to succeeding ages, as shall more clearely appeare in the chapter following.

THE FOVRTH CHAPTER.

The Rules and Religious orders that haue ſprung vp ſince the Apoſtles times.

THat the Apoſtles did exactly obſerue this Rule of theirs may be gathered out of the ſame place *Mat.* 19. by the words of S. Peter in the name of the reſt *Ecce nos reliquimus omnia, & ſecuti ſumus te*, Behold we haue left all things, and haue followed thee. Which *S. Hierom. epiſt.* 8. *ad Demet.* will haue to be a thing proper to the Apoſtles, and deriued frō them. S. Gregory Nazianzē and S. Chriſoſtome with others affirme vpon good grounds that S. *Iohn Baptiſt* was the firſt monke

monke. S. *Dioniſe* ſaith, that the Apoſtles were called Monkes, ſeruants of God, and declares their forme of monaſticall profeſſion *l. de cæl. Hier. c. 6.* which muſt needs be to ſome Rule. *S. Hierome* is of opinion that S. Marke was the head and founder of monaſticall life; which alſo affirmed *Philo* the Iew according to Euſebius *l. 2. hiſt. c. 16.* who hauing bene at Rome to conſult with S. Peter deſcribed the life and manner of the monkes in Egipt. Alſo *Peter Damian* and *Caſsian* doe ſay that the monaſticall order or life hath beene from the Apoſtles times. *S. Athanaſius* in the life of *S. Antony* makes mention of monkes before him; And *S. Dioniſe* Pope, as witneſſeth Baronius, was a monke; notwithſtanding *S. Antony* is ſaid to be father of the monkes of Ægipt,

becauſe he brought the monkes that were diſperſed vnto an vniformitie, giuing them a certaine forme or Rule of life. *Pachomius* after him gaue them a Rule which an Angel dictated vnto him, where with he made ſuch happy progreſſe, that in short time he aſſembled together 7000. mōkes. In the ſame time liued the holy Abbot *Simphranus*, who built a Monaſtery without the towne of Millan, whither he retired with many diſciples, to whom he gaue a Rule. The like alſo many others haue done, but the holy Church hath only admitted of foure principall whereon depend all other Rules, as on the foure cardinal vertues all other inferiour vertues do depend. Or we may ſay that there are but foure Rules, becauſe there be but foure principall

pall Patriarkes of Religious persons.

The first is the Rule of *S. Basil*, who was the first that obliged the monkes to make a vow after the yeare of probation or tryall, to remaine in their Monasteries, and promise entire obedience to their superiours, vowing also chastitie, and pouertie, and in this respect it is said to be the first Rule of all others, because he first brought the Religious to make a solemne profession; he builded in Armenia a very great Monasterie, wherein there remained more than 3000. Mõkes. This order doth flourish as yet in some parts of Greece, and Italy; all the regulars of the Easterne parts doe liue vnder this Rule, as also the Carmelites, with others.

The second is that of. *S Au-*

guſtine vnder which liue all the Cannon Regulars, Dominicans, Auguſtins, Brigittins, Hieronimites, Scopetines, thoſe of S. Iohn of Hieruſalem, and of the hoſpitals of S. Antony, and the Croucers, although there be ſome difference in their conſtitutions and habits.

The third is that of *S. Benedict*, who hauing gathered together all the ſcattered monkes in Italie, and brought them to the mountaine called Caſſin, the chiefe place of this Order, gaue them a Rule which they and their ſucceſſours were to obſerue, vnder which Rule doe militate all the blacke monkes to the great benefit of Gods Church, and conuerſion of many Countries, and in particular of our poore Country of England, which with iuſt reaſon ought to acknow-

ledge

ledge them for its Patrons and Apoſtles. To this Rule, or rather to this Order, according to ſome, we may reduce that holy order of Charter Monkes, who obſerue a moſt ſtrict and auſtere life, according to the preſcription of their ſtatutes. The like may be ſaid of the Ieſuits, who liuing by certaine ſtatutes appropriated for their manner of liuing, may be put vnder this holy Patriarke, vnleſſe you will range them vnder the ſtanderd of *S. Auguſtine* oppoſite enemie to Heretickes, as they are.

The fourth and laſt is that of *S. Francis*, who beeing one day amongſt others in S. Damians Church, kneeling before a Crucifix, heard a voice that ſaid vnto him *Franciſce repara domum meam*, Francis goe repaire my houſe, which thou ſeeſt ready

to

to fall to ruine, conforming presently his will to the will of God, and his life to the life of our Sauiour, put on a courſe habit, girded himſelfe with a cord, going barefoot; and together with others that came to him made profeſſion of pouertie, and holy beggery; and hauing made a Rule by the inſpiration of God, it was confirmed and approued by the Popes, Innocent the third, and Honorius the third. So that *S. Francis* may truly be called patriarke of the Mendicants. He would haue his children called Minors, in teſtimonie of their great humilitie, the progreſſe of whoſe order all the whole world admires. Haueing briefely ſpoken of the Rules that haue beene made for Religious men, the nature of our ſubiect requires that

that we doe as much for Religious woemen.

The fift Chapter.

How that in all ages since Christ there haue bene religious woemen, aswell as men.

ALthough in the old law we may see a kind of shadow of religiõ in some woemen, especially in that holy woman *Iudith*, of whom it is written that in the higher part of her house shee made her a secret chamber, wherein shee abode shut vp with her maides, and hauing cloath of haire vpon her loynes she fasted all the dayes of her life, excepting some few festiuall dayes. Yet this is not

not ſuch a profeſſion by ſolemne vow as now our religious woemen doe make, to the great embelliſhment of Gods Church, admitting into their cõpany thoſe of another family, yea & another nation too, which Iudith did not. And as in all ages and times there haue beene religious men, ſo haue there beene Religious and holy woemen: for if you find a *Mark* to begin the monkes in Egipt, there will not be wanting a *Martha* to begin the Nunnes at Marſiles: and *S. Dioniſe* cã as well shew the forme of conſecrating virgins, as declare the profeſſion of religious men. If *S. Pachomius* did giue a Rule to his monkes, his ſiſter with other deuout woemen muſt haue another, in all things almoſt like to that of his monkes. *S. Baſile* had no ſooner begunne to gather his monkes to a good

vni-

vniformitie, but some deuout woemen came to receiue the benefit thereof by vndergoing such a course of life as he should prescribe vnto thē, as may be gathered out of his words, and exhortations to them for the conseruation of their virginitie. *S. Augustine* had not satisfied the world, if he had not left those religious companies of Cannonesses who militate vnder the name of *S. Monica*. As there was a *Benedict* to enflame the whole world, so there was a *Scholastica* who began the Benedictine Dames.

And, not tediously to prosecute all things, as our holy Father *S. Francis* did beginne the profession of strict pouerty, so there were many deuout woemen that would imitate his example, amongst whome the first was the blessed virgin *S. Clare* from whom comes the

the auſtere and perfect order of the poore Clares, who as they acknowledge *B. S. Francis* for their Father, ſo they eſteeme Bleſſed *S. Clare* for their Mother. What ſhall I ſay of *S. Brigit*, *S. Tereſa*, *S. Elizabeth*, *S. Collet*, with many others that haue beene famous in this kind, no way inferiour, if not exceeding men. Wherfore not without myſterie ſayth the holy Euangeliſt. *Mat.* 24. *erant ibi mulieres multæ à longe, quæ ſecutæ erant Ieſum à Galilæa miniſtrantes*. There were there many woemen a farre of, which had followed Ieſus from Gallile miniſtring vnto him. Many men and woemen followed Chriſt to his paſſion, but alas! the men fled away, only the woemen ſtay: *Vide conuerſum ordinem*, ſaith Euthemius, *Diſcipuli ſiquidem fugerant, diſcipulæ vero aſſiſtentes permanebant.*

bant. Behold a contrarie order; for the disciples who ought to giue strength to others, and in words are ready to dye with Christ, doe fly, but the woemen, although weaker by their sex, yet stronger by their faith, doe remaine by him in all his afflictions assisting him; and as they stayd last, so they deserued first before all others to enioy the sight of Christ rising, by whom they were sent to the Apostles, being made as S. *Chrysostome* saith Apostles to the Apostles.

Thus then briefely hauing declared what a Rule is, and the diuersitie of Rules in men and woemen, it is now time to show what this Rule is. And for that in the title it is called the Rule of the third order, it is necessarie first to show what the third order is.

THE SIXT CHAPTER.

What the third order, and their Rule is.

THE holy Church ſingeth in the office of *S. Francis. Tres ordines hic ordinat, primumque fratrum nominat Minorum, pauperumque ſit dominarum medius, ſed pœnitentium tertius ſexum capit vtrumque* That is to ſay, This Sainct by diuine inſpiration ordayned three orders, the firſt he named the order of Friar Minours, the ſecond or middle is of the poore ladies or poore Clares, but the third of penitents doth comprehend both ſexes. For When this holy Father had made a Rule for his brothers, and obtayned

acon-

a confirmation thereof, he made a ſecond Rule which he gaue to Saint *Clare* in moſt things conformable to the firſt Rule; but afterward hauing authoritie frō the Pope to preach pennance, the Friars being then called Preachers of penance, and hauing a particular reuelation from God, that it was his will he should labour for the conuerſion of ſinners, he went forth with ſuch feruour to put Gods will in execution, that whole villages and townes were almoſt void of inhabitants, all of them deſiring to forſake the world, and doe pennance for their ſinnes: whereupon he was forced to giue them ſome ſatisfaction by preſcribing vnto them a certaine Rule, forme, or manner of life, which Rule is commonly called the third Rule, becauſe it is the third diſtinct

ſtinct Rule he made: or the Rule of the third order, becauſe it is a third diſtinct order from the other two, called alſo the order of Penitentes, becauſe the profeſſours thereof are to doe pennance for their ſinnes And this admits all ſorts and ſexes; for as pennance is the common way for all to goe to heauen, ſo this Rule or order is common to all, admitting both clergy and laitie, virgin and married of both ſex: the fruite whereof the chapters following will shew.

From hence comes that generall cuſtome almoſt in all other orders, as in that of *S. Dominicke* as S. Antonine teacheth, the *Auguſtines*, *Carmelits*, and others, to inſtitute and ordayne Rules of the third order, who commonly are called brothers and ſiſters of pennance, the declaration whereof

reof I omit as not concerning my purpose. It suffices that I haue briefely set downe how it began in our order, if any one desire to see it more at large, let him read the Chronicles of the Friar Minors, and S. Bonauenture in the life of S. *Francis.*

THE SEAVENTH CHAPTER.

Who was the Author of this Rule.

ALthough we haue said before that *S. Francis* was the first author, and beginner of this Rule, yet because some seeme to make a doubt hereof, attributing it to Pope Nicholas the fourth, I could not passe on, vntill I had remoued this scruple. True it is that

that Pope *Nicholas* did make it more publicke, and more authenticall by inſerting it in his bull giuen in the yeare 1289. ſome threeſcore and eight yeares after *S. Francis* had begun it, but that was onely to confirme not to inſtitute the Rule. The teſtimonie of *S. Bonauenture* may ſuffice herein, vho in the 4. chapter of the life of *S. Francis* ſaith, that many of both ſexes enflamed by the feruour of his preachings did ſerue God in coniugall chaſtitie, according to the Rule which the man of God had giuen them. The ancient forme of profeſſion inſinuates as much, *I Brother N. doe vow &c. to obſerue the Commandements of God all the time of my life, and conueniently to ſatiſfie for the tranſgreſſions or faults, which I ſhall commit againſt this Rule and manner of liuing of*

the

the third Order of Pennance, instituted by S. Francis and confirmed by Pope Nicholas &c. This forme is taken out of the booke called *firmamentũ trium ordinum*, whence *Bernardinus de Bustis* a famous preacher had good reason to say, that the Inuentors of this Rule were not Friar minors, nor any Bishop, nor Doctor nor any Congregation, but the seraphicall Father *S. Francis*, the holy ghost teaching him, hath ordayned it. Which also is confirmed by the words of the said Pope *Nicholas*, who writing to the bishop of Florence in the yeare 1291. forbids any one to molest, or trouble the Brothers of the third order of pennance, to whom, saith he, we haue giuen a forme of liuing, as it hath bene giuen by *S. Francis*, causing it to be noted by our Bull, to the end that the Brothers remaine

maine not doubtfull, and inconstant in the obseruance of their life. *Leo* the 10. hath almost the same. Pope *Clement* the 7. in his bull *Ad vberes fructus* in the yeare 1526. hath it more plainely; his words are these. And although the Rule of pennance instituted by *S. Francis* and approued by *Nicholas* our predecessour &c.

Moreouer it seemes very vnlikely, that this order so much celebrated, & multiplied through the whole world, wherein there haue beene euen in the very beginning Emperours, and Empresses, kings and queenes, Bishops and priests, Doctours and illustrious persons of all sorts, should not haue a Rule, whereby they might direct their life. To this we may adde, what is recorded in the life of B. *Luchesius* one of the first of this order, namely that he demanded

a *Rule*

a *Rule* of the holy Father S. Francis, who granted him his requeſt, and gaue him the habit. Alſo in the life of *S. Viridane* we read that our holy Father gaue her the habit, and inſtructing her left her a Rule to liue by in her ſolitude, wherein she liued many yeares. And who can doubt, but Bleſſed *S. Elizabeth* of Hungary had ſome certaine Rule whereof she made profeſſion. Wherefore it being certaine, that our holy Father inſtituted this Rule, it ſeemes neceſſarie to enquire of the diuerſitie of the Profeſſours thereof; as alſo how it hath made that progreſſe to perfection as now we ſee it is come vnto.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Of the ſeuerall branches in this Order.

THE feruent ſpirit of our holy Father S. *Francis* by his preaching of pēnance tooke ſuch effect, that it ſeemed he had ſet the whole world on fire with the inflaming loue of God, which did not ſtay only in thoſe parts where he preached, but alſo did extend it ſelfe ouer the whole vniuerſe. There is no place, country, citie, towne or village where this fire hath not taken hold, there is no degree, qualitie, or ſex that hath not felt it, but in ſeuerall manner according to the ſubiect it lighted vpon.

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In some it had not that effect to make thē leaue their families, and goods, but enioying their tēporall estates they would serue God vnder this Rule and Order, amongst which their haue bene Bishops who haue not esteemed it to derogate frō their perfectiō to weare the habit and cord of Blessed S. *Francis*, yea some Popes, cardinals, and ecclesiasticall men of all sorts. For confirmation whereof I will produce the words of the renowned and most eminent Cardinall *Tricio* in his deuout and learned Epistle to the R. Fa. *Luke Wadding* (whose fame is diuulged through the whole world by his learned Annals which he hath made of our Order) who hath inserted it in his deuout commentaries, which he hath made on the workes of our Holy Father,

wherein the ſaid Cardinall hath many things in the praiſe of our ſeraphicall Order, and comming to this third Order thus expoſtulateth.

Doe you admire and deſire to celebrate my praiſe, for that after the purple of Cardinall dignitie I haue put on the habit of the third Order, and profeſſed the third Rule of our Fa. S. *Francis*! but how can I, who profeſſe my life and all I haue to be of S. *Francis*, exhibite any ſigne of deuotion, vnleſſe I conſecrate or deuote my ſelf to his Religion. What is the girdle of S. *Francis* vnbeſeeming to girt the regal purple? *Lewis* king of France, and *Elizabeth* princeſſe of Hungary now numbred amongſt the Saints were girt with it, empreſſes, kings, queenes, and other princes whoſe number this yeare at the time of

his

his death by most deuoutly receiuing the habit *Philip* the 3. king of Spaine did encreaſe, as alſo *Elizabeth* queene of Spaine wife to *Philip* the 4. and the princeſſe *Marie* ſiſter of the ſame Philip the 4. gaue their names to this Religion. Perhaps the cilice doth not become the Royall dignitie? certainely it doth, and in the time of *Elizeus* the prophet, the ſacred hiſtorie doth tell that the king of Iſrael did vſe it. Wherefore then doe you admire, that a Cardinall should put vpon his purple a cinericious habit, and gird himſelfe with a cord. You ſay it is a habit too humble for ſuch a dignitie. But I anſwere, therefore it is to be taken in this time &c. What therfore should I doe, when I am eleuated to ſo ſupreme a dignitie in the Church, but defend

my ſelfe with the humility of S. *Francis* whereby I may more ſecurely beare the labours and burthen of my enioyned charge. But what more? is not the cinericious or ashy coloured habit of S. *Francis* truly purple, wherewith Royall and Cardinall dignitie may be adorned? It is truely purple, which the bloud of Chriſt hath coloured and the faith of his paſſion ſigned, and which in Chriſts place *S. Francis* hath made redde with his proper bloud flowing from his ſtigmats. Is the humilitie of Chriſt a ſeruitude? that is not ſeruile which doth nobilitate the Royall purple. If any one should contemne, or abhoire this habit, let him conſider that it is not gray but purple; for humilitie vndertaken for Chriſt doth carry with it a Royall dignitie. What therefore haue I

done? I haue couered purple with purple, and that of a Cardinall with a kingly one. It is so farre from humbling me, that I may doubt whether I am become prouder thereby. Thus farre the foresaid Cardinall. Whence we may gather that this Order is sutable to Popes and Cardinals, kings and princes, and other of what condition soeuer they be, and this day in Spaine nothing more frequent, almost whole townes being of this Order.

There are other sorts of the third order, both mē and woemen who are taken either in the Conuents of Friar Minors, or Monasteries of S. *Clare*, or of other Religions that liue vnder the gouernement of the Friar Minors; in other Orders they are called Donats, because they giue themselues to the seruice of such a

houſe,and Oblates becauſe offered vp to ſuch an end:theſe make only ſimple vowes. There are others, whom the fire of diuine loue hath cauſed to leaue the world, and liue in communitie vnder ſolemne vowes of obediẽce,pouertie,and chaſtitie, profeſſing this Rule of the 3. Order, not barely as it was made by the ſeraphicall Father S. *Francis*, but as it is accomodated to their ſtate by ſeuerall Popes as we ſhall shew hereafter. Some of theſe doe addict themſelues to the keeping of Hoſpitals, teaching of children, ſeruing the ſicke, and ſuch like.

Finally there be ſome,that to make a compleat religious ſtate, haue ioyned certaine ſtatutes to their Rule, for the better attaining to perfection,and doe adde the fourth vow of Encloſure. Of

theſe

theſe in this our treatiſe we meane to ſpeake, explicating the Rule conformably to their eſtate. This diuerſitie may perhaps ſeeme ſtrange to the Reader, and therfore it shall not be amiſſe to shew how it was brought in, by shewing what progreſſe in perfection this holy Order hath made.

The ninth Chapter.

Of the great progreſſe that the profeſſors of this Rule haue made in the way of perfection.

PLutarch in his apothegmes ſaith, that there be more who adore the ſunne riſing than the ſunne ſetting; and that in ſome occaſions with iuſt reaſon, for

ſuch is the frailtie of creatures that all things are ſubiect to decay, and euen man by nature growes worſe and worſe, being as Ariſtotle ſaith, the example of imbecillitie, ſpoyle of time, play of fortune, and image of inconſtancy. Whence it is that almoſt all orders haue decayed, and fallen from their firſt feruour and zeale, which can neuer be repaired, but by caſting our eies vpon the riſing ſunne of that ſpirit which firſt began ſuch and ſuch an Order, ſetting before vs the heroicall vertues of our progenitors, endeauouring with new force and vigor to imitate their examples. Let vs not looke vpon the ſunne ſetting, that is on the tepide and cold ſtate, that the corruption of nature hath brought vs to, bnt as the Prophet *Iſay* ſaith, Attend to the rocke, that is, the firſt founder

whence

whence we were hewen out; for in Christ they haue begotten vs, and to the caue of the lake, to the Profession of our Rule from whence wee are cut out, that is, hacked and hewed, and made fitting for the celestiall Hierusalē. There is no better way to reduce vs to perfection than by returning to the begining. Whence in all orders almost there haue bene continuall reformations, which not withstanding doe soone decay;

I pray God that the like doe not happen to this third Order, which hitherto contrary to the ordinary course hath dayly more and more encreased, not only in number but also in perfection, and from a low shrubbe is become a faire and beautifull tree, from the lowest state in Gods Church to be equall in a manner with the hi-

higheſt. I can ſee nothing here, but what the prophet Ezechiel denounceth c. 37. God made a league of peace to them, and an euerlaſting couenant shalbe to them; he hath founded them, and will multiplie them, and giue them his ſanctification in the midſt of them for euer. The continuãce in the ſame ſtate is much, conſidering our frailtie, but to encreaſe dayly more and more in perfection is the hand of the almightie, which particularly is to be ſeene in this Order; for in the beginning it was but a certaine deuout courſe of life, which our ſeraphicall Father did preſcribe for all ſorts, as is ſaid before, but not long after the inſtitution therof, it became a ſett Order and ſtate of life, for within ſix or ſeauen yeares after the Bleſſed and glorious Saint S. *Elizabeth of*

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hungary (as *Iodocus Chlictouæus* reporteth) made a formall profeſſion of this Rule, and did take a gray poore patched habit, and girt her ſelfe with a rude cord, going alwayes barefoot, ſpending the reſt of her dayes in a moſt auſtere manner with ſome of her ladies cloathed in the ſame habit, and profeſſed in the ſame Order. Which, as it ſeemes, was the firſt communitie that militated vnder this Rule. After this the moſt pious *Angela* counteſſe of *Ciuitella*, hauing gathered together many noble virgins at Fulginea (which is a towne ſome twelue miles diſtant from Aſſiſium) did build a couent vnder the title of S. Anne, wherein entring with her companions, and making the three vowes of chaſtitie, obedience, and pouertie, she perſeuered in great ſanctitie to her death

death, as is to be ſeene hereafter in her life. After her example very many virgins gathering their meanes together cauſed to be builded and erected in short time 8. monaſteries in diuerſe parts of Italie, wherein they did liue vnder the habit and Rule of the third Order of S. *Francis*. *Gonzaga* ſaith that this B. woman was the firſt who did make theſe ſolemne vowes in this third Order. But in this there ſeemes to be a great miſtake, for this Sainct liued in the yeare 1309. whereas in the yeare 1295. Pope *Boniſacius* the 8. doth affirme that many monaſteries were begunne in Germany wherto he gaue many priuiledges which belong only to religious orders, as chapples and oratories, as is to be ſeene in F. *Luke Wadding* in the 2. tome of his Annales, who alſo in the

yeare

yeare 1282. n. 11. relates that B. *Dulcina* contemning the world did offer her ſelfe to God vnder the habit and rule of pennance, very many yong virgins and graue matrons running in the odour of her ſanctitie did doe the ſame. And before this in the yeare 1252. num. 7. he deſcribes the life of B. Sainct *Roſe of Viterbia*, who by the commandement of our lady tooke the habit of the third Order in a Monaſterie neare there about; and this was within 31. yeares after the beginning of this Order. Nay before this neare Florence there were many communities wherto our holy Father gaue a Rule, it is very likely that ſome of theſe did make the ſolemne vowes, but whether they did or no makes not much to our purpoſe: at leaſt it shewes how this Order hath

ſtill

ſtill augmented in perfection. Let vs now ſee what it hath done from S. *Angelaes* time.

And we shall find it alwayes to be abbettered, for *Sixtus*. 4. in the yeare 1480. in his Breue, *Ad Chriſti Vicarij*, hath theſe words. Truely long agoe we haue vnderſtood that ſome brethen and ſiſters of the 3. order of S. *Francis* by ſpeciall grant of me and my predeceſſours liuing collegially after the yeare of probation, doe vow and promiſe in the hands of their ſuperiours canonically elected by their colledge, chaſtitie, obedience and pouertie. Whereto Pope *Innocent the* 8. in the yeare 1487. added the vow of enclosure, which made Pope *Leo the* 10. to accomodate the Rule that was ordained by S. *Francis* approued and confirmed by *Nicholas* the 4. to a Religious ſtate. And

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Clement the 7. in his Bull *Ad vberes fructus* an 1526. and *Pius 5.* in his Bull *ea est officij nostri* an. 1568. haue more amply declared it. So that now it is become more perfect and compleat, conuenient for a Religious state, whereof because some without any iust reason haue made doubt, I will endeauour to make it cleare by the succeeding chapter.

The tenth Chapter.

Whether the third Order be a Religious state.

THis question may seeme superfluous, after what hath beene said in in the precedēt chapter, neuertheleſſe to stoppe the mouthes of some, whose rash and teme-

temeratious iudgments doe shew their tongues to runne before their wits, and who imprudently, I will not say malitiously seeme to derogate from the honour and esteeme of this holy order, I will adde a word or two. But first we must distinguish this order into two classes, to wit of them that liue in their houses out of communitie, and of them that liue conuentually together.

Certaine it is that the first are not truly and properly r eligious because they doe not make profession of the three essentiall vowes, notwithstanding their ininstitution, as *Hieronimus Roderi-cus*, and *Portell* verb. *Tertiarij* doe well note, may be called an order or a certaine forme of life approued by the Church; for order doth extend it selfe further than a Religious state which re-

quires

quires the three vowes, which order doth not, but only signifies direction or ordination which such haue by their Rule.

Those that liue in communitie or in collegiall or conuentuall manner, are truely and properly Religious. For to Religious state there are required four things, to wit, a permanency in that state, a particular rule, solemne vowes, and the approbation of the Church.

The first is required, because Religion is said to haue an immoueable condition of life, and to carrie with it a stable perfection, which made S. *Thomas* 2. 2. q. 184. ar. 8. to preferre it before all other degrees inferiour to Bishops, giuing this reason, because Religion is a permanent and vnchangeable state, whence Religion is called *Ciuitas Dei* the city of God.

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Holocauſtum medullatum a fatt holocauſt, *Manſio ſolitudinis* a manſion of ſolitude, *Mons & via Syon* the Mountaine and way of Syon, *Petra refugij* the rocke of refuge, *requies ſanctificata* ſanctified reſt, *Stadium currentium* the liſt of thē that runne, *vigiliæ ſolemnitatis perpetuæ* the vigils of perpetuall ſolemnitie &c.

The ſecond is required, not that the eſſence of Religion cannot ſtand without it, but becauſe the Church doth not ordinarily approue of any Religious order without ſome particular Rule, and from hence it is called *Domus ſapientiæ* the houſe of wiſdome, *Exercitium diſciplinæ* the exerciſe of diſcipline, *fluuius Orationum* riuer of prayers, *iter rectum* right way, the golden way, the feeld of corne, with many ſuch like.

The third, to wit, the ſolemne

vowes

vowes of chaſtitie, pouertie, and obedience are eſſentially required, for by Religion one doth conſecrate and dedicate himſelfe wholy to God, which is perfectly done by thoſe three vowes. And frō hence Religion is called another Baptiſme, the bath of ſoules, *cella aromatum, argenti & auri, & odoramentorum, & unguenti optimi. Iſay* 39. ſtorehouſe of aromaticall ſpices, and of ſiluer, and of ſweet odours, and of the beſt ointment. *Ciuitas in monte poſita Mat.* 5. a cittie placed on a mountaine, the warfar of our Lord the furnace of the holy Ghoſt, flight of the world, ſweet yoake of Chriſt, ſchoole of Chriſt, lād of pouertie, with many ſuch like.

The laſt is requiſite to make it a ſecure, certaine, and ſpirituall ſtate. Neither was euer any Religious Order inſtituted without

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the approbation of the Church, not that the Popes haue alwayes done it, for in ancient time it was sufficiēt that they were approued by Bishops, but in the Laterane generall Councell it was forbidden vnder paine of excommunication that any new Religion should beginne without expresse approbation of the Pope, to whō alone, as by many other councells it hath beene decreed, belongs the approbation, confirmation, and declaration of Rules or Religious orders, so that now it is absolutely necessarie, that the Pope doe giue his approbation, otherwise it would not be esteemed a Religious state.

Now these foure are to be found in the professours of this third Order, and therfore none can doubt but that they are truely

and

and properly Religious; for first their state is permanent and stable, no way allowing any one to goe backe againe to the world. Secondly they haue a particular Rule, as hath beene manifested before. Thirdly they make the solẽne vowes of obedience, chastitie, and pouertie, as may be seene in their forme of Profession. And lastly their Rule, state, and Profession is approued by the Church. For some twenty Popes haue confirmed and approued the Rule, and *Sixtus* 4. in the yeare 1480. *Ad Christi Vicarij* declares their vowes to be solemne, and to haue all the effects that other solemne vowes haue, as that none can leaue the Order, and that matrimonie made by them is of no force, and that they are sufficient to dissolue matrimonie that

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is not consummated. *Innocentius the* 8. hath confirmed the same, and so hath *Leo the* 10. *Clement the* 7. *and Pius* 5. which two haue made more ample declaration of the Rule. So that no man can doubt but that the professours of this Rule are truely Religious, and that they enioy all priuiledges that other Religious persons haue. Of this in the next chapter.

The eleventh Chapter.

What Priuiledges this Third order enioyeth.

WE must still vse the former distinction, for those that are of this Order and liue in their houses out of commu-

nitie

nitie doe only enioy thoſe priui-
ledges that are granted to the
Friarminors, and are purely ſpiri-
tuall, as indulgences abſolutions
and ſuch like. And ſo all thoſe
that doe not make the three
vowes.

But thoſe that liue in commu-
nitie, and are ſubiect to the Ordi-
naries, making the three vowes,
doe enioy all, and ſingular, the pri-
uiledges, that haue bene giuen pe-
culiarly to the third Order which
indeed are very many; whereas
thoſe that are ſubiect to the Friar
minors, are participāt of all the pri-
uiledges, Indults, and graces, that
haue or shalbe giuen to the Friar
Minors or poore Clares. For to
omitt other Popes Leo the thēth
in *Bulla Dudū fælicis* cōmunicates
vnto the Religions of this third
Order, all and whatſoeuer priui-

ledges that had beene granted to the poore Clares: and before, in his Bull, *Ea perquæ*, he communicated vnto them that had beene granted to the Friar minors. *Clement* the 7. in his bull. *Dum vberes fructus*, doth put all three Orders together, and communicates to them, all three, all the priuiledges, graces, and grants, that haue beene giuē to any Religious mēdicants or not mēdicants, *Iulius* the 3. confirmes the same. *Paulus* the 4. more amply, as also *Pius* the 4. The same hath bene done but with limitation to the Councell of Trent by *Greg.* 13. *Sixtus* 5. and *Clment* 8.

Whence it appeares, that as these three Orders came forth from one rocke that is from the holy and seraphicall Father S. *Francis*, as hath bene declared before,

fore ſo the ſoueraigne Paſtours of Gods Church haue imparted equall graces, and fauours, which shewes the great eſteeme that they had of this Rule, and profeſſion.

I omit here to ſet downe the particular Priuiledges that hereby haue beene grãted to this Order as being very many, and obuious in the authors that haue ſpoken of the Priuiledges of our Order as *Hieronymus Roderiquez*, *Portell*, and others: in the meane time there ariſeth a queſtion concerning their ſubiection to the Friar minors which requires another chapter.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

To whom the religious of this order are ſubiect.

IT being certaine that euery true Religions man by force and nature of his ſtate is ſubiect to ſome higher power, which not only conſiſts in gouerning and ruling their ſubiects, but alſo in iuriſdiction, for no man can be truly Religious, vnleſſe He be lawfully receiued in the name of the Church, which requires a ſpirituall iuriſdiction in the receiuer, who may admit of them punish them, and ſuch like. The queſtion therfore is, in whom remaines this ſuperiour power to doe

doe the fore ſaid things.

Moreouer it is certaine that ſetting aſide exemptions, all Religious are ſubiect to the gouernement of the Bishops, in whoſe territorie or dioceſſe their honſes are, for the Bishop is Paſtour of the whole flocke reſiding in his dioceſſe. So that the exemptions, which now all Religious enioy, be nothing elſe but a freedome from the power and iuriſdiction, whereto formerly by nature of their ſtate and law of the Church they were ſubiect, which can be done by none but by the ſupreame Paſtour of the Churh, who alone can limite and ſtreighten the power and iuriſdiction of Bishops For although the power and authority of Bishops be ordinary and as they ſay, of the diuine law, yet it is extended to their ſub-

iects dependently vpon *S. Peter* and his ſucceſſours, from whom iuriſdiction ouer ſuch and ſuch ſubiects is deriued: ſo that the Pope without all queſtion can modifie, mitigate, limite, or extend their power, as he ſhall iudge conuenient, and requiſite for the good of Gods Church. And from him alone, Haue beene granted to religious, their exemptions, partly out of the great loue and deuotion, that many Popes haue borne to Religion, and partly to take, away many iniurious abuſes that by the continuall iarres of the clergie did creepe into the Church, but principally for foure reaſons, to wit for the greater vniformitie of Religion, neceſſitie of their ſtate, alleuiation or eaſing of the bishops burden, and the more exact gouernement of Religious per-

persons.

Nothing is more necessarie in Religion than vniformitie, which vnder the ordinaries could hardly be obserued; for each Diocesse hath its seuerall customes and lawes, and these Religious orders being dispersed through whole kingdomes in all places of the world, should haue thereby a seuerall manner of liuing. Wherefore Popes haue thought it more reasonable, that they should be subiect to superiours who with as much vniformitie as may be might gouerne them in all parts of the world, that so there may be no confusion amongst them.

As for the necessity of there state since no Bishop hath power out of his Diocesse to send forth any, for to preach, it is necessary that those orders that haue care and charge of preaching and

teaching for the conuerſion of indfidels and heretickes, should haue ſome power to put this in execution, and to ſend thoſe that are ſitting for ſuch imployments without dependence of the ordinaries, whoſe authoritie doth not extend it ſelfe ſo farre. Perhaps ſome will ſay, that this authoritie might be giuē to Bishops, I admit it, but they doe not conſider the great inconuenience that would come thereby, for ſuppoſing the bishop of this Dioceſſe ſend ſome one or two, the bishop of the next Dioceſſe one or two more to the ſame place, and ſo the like of others; either theſe muſt liue as ſtrangers one to another, which is contrary to their inſtitution, or elſe they muſt liue in communitie together, and then who shall be ſuperiour

periour to gouerne them. Any one that hath the least experience in matters of Religion, may iudge what inconuenience may come thereby.

Few perhaps doe consider the third reason, vntill they feele the burden; How soeuer all will say, that the ordinaries are hereby freed from many troubles and difficulties of conscience, for it were a thing morally impossible that the Bishop could by himselfe attend to all Religious persons, or visite all Religious houses, and therfore he must necessarily committ the charge to others who perhaps carelessly, or not so vprightly would performe that charge, and some times not vnderstanding the state of such Religious persons they were to visit or gouerne, would cause many relaxations.

Wherfore for the better and more ſecure gouernement, it hath beene ordayned that each order ſhould be gouerned by ſuperiours of their owne order, who knowing the true ſtate and manner of liuing might keepe them in a vniforme manner of life, and ordaine lawes fitting for ſuch a ſtate. For practicall experience more auaileth for the aduancement of any good gouernement, than ſpeculatiue knowledge drawen from bookes without practiſe, and yet this is the moſt that ordinarily thoſe that are not of the ſame order haue. For this reaſon no doubt, Bleſſed S. *Ignatius* founder of the holy Societie of Ieſus not hauing begunne any order of woemen, becauſe his inſtitution was principally to preach and teach, did particularly ordaine, that none of his ſhould take

take charge and care of Nunnes, well knowing that diuersitie of spirits might cause diuersity of instructions, and consequently as many if not more confusions and so he would that euery one should looke to his owne charge and the sheepe be left to their owne pastours.

For such and many other reasons haue Popes exempted most Religious orders from the gouernement and iurisdiction of Bishops. As in particular they haue donde to our order, for *Honorius* 3. who approued our Rule did exempt both the Franciscans and Dominicans from episcopall iurisdiction, *Innocentius* 4. did it more amply, with many other. And that this third order is also exempted, is manifest by what hath beene said in the precedent chap-

chapter; for if it enioyeth all the priuiledges of the first order, it must necessarily also enioy this exemption which is an especiall priuiledge, much tending to the good of their order. Besides diuerse Popes haue wholy submitted it, and the order of the poore clares to the gouernement of the Friar Minors, as may be seene in the Bulles of Pope *Martin* the 5. *Sixtus*. 4. *Leo* 10. *Clement*. 7. with many others, as is to be seene in the Bullarie of *Roderiques*. Yea *Clement* the 7. doth extend this grace to their houses, monasteries, Churches Prelats, seruants, men, and woemen, benefactors, persons, substance, and goods whatsoeuer granting them to vse and enioy all and singular the exemptions, priuiledges, immunities, prerogatiues, indulgences, in-

indults, fauours, conſeruatories graces, which the Friar Minors and Preachers and ſiſters of S. *Clare*, or any other whatſoeuer mendicant orders doe enioy, or ſhall enioy in future times, not only like vnto them or by way of Communication, but equally and principally without any difference, the Popes following as is ſaid before, ſtill giuing them the like exemptions. And *Pius* 5. expreſſely commands them to ſubmit themſelues to the order of the Friars, in all things to be gouerned, directed, viſited, and ſerued by the Friar Minors to whō alſo they haue committed the care, and charge ouer them.

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THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

What were the motiues that drew Popes to grant these priuiledges and graces to this third order.

I Know not who can better decide this question, than the Popes themselues who haue beene so liberall to this sacred order; and therfore I will produce their owne words most making to our purpose, omitting many others that might be set downe and are to be seene in their Bulles more at large. And to beginne with Pope *Gregorie the.* 9. who liued in the very beginning of this order, he in his Bull *cum dilecti*

filij

filij ſaith of the religious of this order that they had left the world to pleaſe our lord in the tower of contemplation, and therfore he frees them from receiuing and executing publicke offices in the world. *Alexander the* 4. doth the ſame, becauſe they hauing left the vanities of this world, being as yet corporally on earth diligently labour in ſpirit and mind to dwell in celeſtialls, and for God to deny ſecular deſires.

Cæleſtinus in his Bulla *Dignum eſſe credimus* giues the ſame, becauſe that being mind full of their laſt end, and forſaking the vanities of this world they deſire with a contrite heart and humble ſpirit to doe pennance.

Leo the tenth in his Bull *Dudum ſalicis* communicates vnto them all the Priuiledges of the

poore

poore clares, becauſe they liue in the ſpirit of pouerty in the lillie of Chaſtitie, and other odours of good fame.

Clement the. 7. goes farther, and communicates vnto them all the priuiledges of all mendicant orders in his Bull *ad vberes fructus.* giuing this reaſon, directing the eie of our conſideration vnto the plentifull fruit, which the ſacred order of Pennance (which the truely ſeraphicall fiſher of men *B. S. Francis* illuminated by the holy Ghoſt, hath ordayned that he might gaine all ſoules to their creatour) hath brought hitherto into the ſtorehouſe of our lord, and euery day ceaſes not to bring in with a more fertile hand; and reuoluing in the ſecrets of our minde, that this order not only by thoſe that

are married of both ſex, but alſo by the brethren and ſiſters liuing in communitie and making the three ſolemne vowes, hath long agoe begun to flourish and euery day doth more and more flourish, &c.

I will omit many ſuch like, and conclude that as the religious of this third order are participant with all other orders in their eſſentiall vowes, religious obſeruances, faſts, mortifications, auſterities, prayers, meditation, cõtemplation, and other labours night and day in the quire, with ought elſe that belongs to a religious ſtate, they ought in all reaſon to participate of the ſame graces and fauours.

But I feare I haue beene ſome what tedious in this ſubiect, yet I hope it wilbe pleaſing to ſome

who are not only desireous to satisfie their curiositie, but also to know the truth. Wherfore I now proceed to my intended purpose, and as I haue set downe the priuiledges that haue beene granted to this order by the Church, so I haue thought good briefely to shew the great graces and gifts that God hath imparted to this order, to witt sanctitie and perfection, both which the Popes holyneſſe hath mentioned in the Prologue.

THE FOVRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Of the ſanctitie of this order.

AS the Church triumphant is peopled with saints, who haue

haue made profeſſion of the three Rules that S. Francis hath left to his children, ſo the Church militant hath beene and is adorned & embellished with many ſaints, and holy perſons whoſe liues and deaths haue beene miraculouſly confirmed by God, and approued by the ſaid Church. For we find that there hath beene in *S. Francis* order 27. canonized ſaints, 606. beatified, of whom the diuine office is celebrated either generally in the whole order, or particularly in ſome kingdomes, Dioceſſes, or townes, and 920. martyrs: beſides infinite others which are not knowne as yet, 1650. Confeſſours notable for Sanctitie of life and miracles: 6. beatified ſaints whoſe canonization is dayly expected, 4. whoſe beatification is in hand all things being finished therto required

quired: 14. who by command of the Pope haue their processe for the next generall beatificatiõ: 133. whose life and miracles are now in the last examine, for to proceed for their beatification; 19. whose processe is before the ordinaries, the number of which encreaseth dayly.

Of all which saints this third order hath had no little share. For in it we may find 5. canonized saints, whereto we may adde *S. Roch* as approued by the practise of the whole Church; 9. beatified 21. knowne martyrs. So that we may well say that of Num. cap. 24. *O quam pulchra tabernacula tua Iacob*, How beautifull are thy tabernacles ô Iacob, and thy tents ô Israell: as wooddie vallies as watered gardens besides the Riuers, as tabernacles which our lord hath pitched, as cedars by the

waterside. O how beautifull are the seuerall congregations militating vnder the tents or Rules of the seraphicall Father S. *Francis*, they are like to wooddy vallies extending themselues through the whole world, which like strong bulwarkes are to withstand the treacheries and deceits of the Diuell: for as he euery day vseth new inuentions to deceiue and deuoure soules, so these orders yeeld new souldiours day ly to vanquish and tread him vnder foot; no soouer doth one troupe begin to faile but another rises vp. And therfore they may well be compared to watered gardēs besides the Riuers, alwayes florishing, and in due time giuing copious fruicts, amongst whome by a pious kinde of emulation the true worship of God

and

and religious pietie dayly encreaseth. And according as they encrease so they are more and more strengthned, being also as tabernacles which our lord hath pitched, that is solide and firme, as being erected and established by God, who hath adorned each member and branche of them with seuerall gifts and graces, conformable to their capacity. This cannot choose but be a great ornament and splendour to the Church, proceeding from the varietie of these cedars by the water side who being watered with the water of grace doe bring forth fruit in abundance.

Truly it is a thing worthy to be noted, that in the sole order of *S. Francis* there is meat for all palats, none can excuse themselues, of weakenesse none can presume of their

of their ſtrength. For amongſt the profeſſours of this order or children of *S. Francis* ſome liue as ſtrictly and with as much auſteritie as in any order of Gods Church as be thoſe of the firſt and ſecond order, but in the third order, as it is now be of all ſorts, ſome liuing in a very ſtrict manner, no way inferiour to the profeſſours of the firſt and ſecond order, ſome obſeruing a meane accomodating themſelues according to the diſpoſition and nature of the country where they liue, others liuing in a deuout manner in their houſes. And out of each of them haue ſprung forth many ſaints, which is an argument that this Rule is holy. And leaſt that any one ſhould thinke I ſpeake without ground I will compendiouſly ſet downe here the liues of

ſome

ſome of them, firſt beginning with the canonized Saints.

THE FISTEENTH CHAPTER.

The life of Bleſſed S. Elizabeth Queene of Hungary compendiouſly extracted out of the Annalls of our Order.

I Haue made choiſe to begin with this glorious ſaint as being the firſt canonized ſaint and (as it ſeemes to me) firſt that liued a clauſtral life in this order, and therfore worthely acknowledged as patroneſſe thereof. Her life is very amply ſet forth in latin by the *R. F. Sedulius*, and now is tranſlated out of french into English by *S. Thomas.* H. whoſe ſweet and elegant ſtile, will

will soone shew a blemish in my harsh and vnpollished phrase: who likes not one may read the other, and pardon my desires to honour so great a Saint, whose heroicall and pious acts require a Seraphs penne. If the reuerence I beare to the holy woman make me ouerbold, the fault is pardonable, or at least to be mended by others: howsoeuer I intend not to make a compleat worke, but a rude delineation and briefe extract of her life, diuiding it into fiue parts, the first shall be of her life vntill she was married, the second of what she did in marriage, the third what she did after her husbands death, the fourth how she finished her life in a religious course, and lastly of her translation.

What this ſainct did vntill ſuch time as she was married.

§. 1.

OMitting the deſcription of her noble race (for she was daughter to the king of Hungary) and the prophecy reported to haue beene made before the world enioyed ſo rare a piece, of her birth, name, wit, miracles, and many, ſuch like things worthy enough of recording; I will beginne at the 7. yeare of her age, when she begins to shew forth the luſtre of her future ſanctitie. For euen now before she well knowes what vertue is, she is become the mirrour and patterne, of vertue, eſpecially of patience and charitie. For although her infancy principally in the more tender ſex might excuſe her griefe

for

for her mothers death, yet she then aboue her age and ſex, tooke it with a conſtant patience, and with a patient charity, not any waies ſeeking to reuenge her deare mother, but ſweetly prayeing for thē who had iniuriouſely takē away her life. And frō thēce forward you should find the little child alwayes in the Church, before ſome Altar or other, now proſtrating her ſelfe in a moſt pious manner, now kneeling for a long ſpace together, with eies and hands lifted vp to heauen, and if she could not get into the Church, ſweetly kneeling at the doore, kiſſeing the threshold, doores and walles of that holy place.

As she encreased in yeares ſo she encreaſed in pietie, making a happy progreſſe in all vertues,

and begins now to lay ſolide grounds of a ſpirituall life. For at the 9. yeare of her age, she begins to haue God alwayes before her eies, and for his ſake to deſpiſe, contemne, and caſt of ſuperfluitie of apparell, the pleaſures of the flesh, and vanity of the world. Now she preſcribes to her ſelfe certaine prayers which she reſolued dayly to make, and if she chanced in the day time to be hindred (as ſeldome she was, becauſe true deuotion will alwayes find occaſion) that her defect would she ſupply in the night. Aboue all other ſaints next to our Bleſſed lady she made choiſe of *S. Iohn Euangeliſt* for her patron, hauing firſt made her prayer to God, that she might chooſe one who should moſt aduance her pious deſires: him she loued, and reuerenced ſo much,

much, that she would neuer deny any thing that was demanded for his sake.

Shee most religiously obserued the solemnities of feasts and holy dayes, and whereas according to the vanitie of the world others adorne and decke themselues with gay apparell, shee on those dayes would take away some thing of her ordinary attire, well knowing that it was more pleasing to God to haue the minde adorned with vertues, than the body with rich apparell, and that a soule addicted to the studie of religious pietie is more acceptable to him, than the corporall substance shining with purple, gold, siluer, iewels or pretious stones, which are but as the drosse of the earth.

Although she were but yet a

child, yet tooke she no delight in childish toyes, and playes, and if by chance she were compelled to daunce, she vſed ſuch temperance therein, that she rather did manifeſther ciuility in cõplieing to their deſires, than any content she had in the recreation. She carried her ſelfe indifferent in all ſuch things, and ſo by a quotidian and dayly excerciſe reſiſted her naturall inclinations, and mortified her appetite alwayes declining from the libertie of a looſe life, she did raiſe vp her ſelfe to greater meanes of perfection. Entring into the Church she would alwayes lay aſide her crowne, vntill ſuch time as all being done she were admonished to returne, for that she thought it a great impietie that her head ſhould there be adorned with the

proude

proude pompe of a glittering crowne, where was represented vnto her the head of our sauiour crowned with pricking thornes. Who could expect such deuotiõ, such high vertues in so tender yeares. It seemed to many (and not without reason) that she was more fitting to liue amongst religious woemen, than in the court; you would iudge that she had beene some Angel in humaine nature, especially where as so many occasions of wordly sensuality were presented vnto her, as all knowe the courts of Princes be subiect to.

What she did in the time of her Marriage.

§ 2.

IN the fourteenth yeare of her age she is forced by the obe-

dience she owed to her Father to marry, and thereby perhaps must mitigate somewhat of this great feruour. But nothing lesse; for her heart was firme and stable in those graces that God had giuen her, more and more sheweing forth her feruour of spirit, dayly encreasing in the study of vertuous actions, feeding her minde with the contemplation of celestiall things, and excercising her body in watchings, prayers, and fasts, oftentimes cautiously rising frō her husbands side in the night to pray. And when she could get opportunity, she would lie on the bare ground, and to preuent all rebellion of the flesh, she chastised her tender body euery fryday with disciplines, & in the lent oftener. Vnder her silkes and sattins she ware continually a haireshirt,

yea

yea many times permitted her maides to discipline and chastise her when she could think that she had done ought amisse. A rare patterne in so great a princesse.

To all this we may adde her great charitie, wherein she spent the greater part of her time, now labouring by word and workes to draw others to amendment of life, by reason whereof many ladies forsooke the vanitie of the world, some by her counsell makeing vowes of chastitie, others entering into religiõ, others who had not receiued the faith by her good counsell and instruction brought to be baptized, she her selfe going to be their God-mother at the font. Otherwhiles going forth to visit poore sicke woemen, comforting and cherishing them with all things necessarie, which she alwayes brought

with her. And indeed she was alwayes mercifull to the poore, not disdaining secretly to dresse their sores and botches, yea their scald-heads and scurfes, where of being sometimes reprehended she ioyfully answered, that she had rather please Christ than mē. And to auoid idlenesse the mother of all mischiefe, being vacant from the aforesaid works of piety she vsed with her maydes to spinne, and therewithall she cloathed the poore. And that her charitie might neuer cease, she caused a faire hospitall to be built, wherein she gaue order that all things necessarie should be prouided for the poore that were weake and sick, which hospitall (although it were on a high mountaine somewhat painfull to ascend) she did ordinarily visit euery day, going with great humilitie to each one

that

that was there, enquiring whether they wanted any thing, or what they desired, and with her owne hands did feed those that were not able to helpe themselues, taking them out of their beds, bearing thē in her armes, and composeing their beds for them. Most louingly would she embrace the poore little children, carrieing them in her armes, and shewing her tender affection to them, as if she had beene their mother: so that ordinarily she was called the Mother of the poore. She neuer regarded their deformitie, diseases, scabs or filth, but louingly receiued all as if they had beene her owne. In this hospitall she had alwayes 28 persons for whom she prouided, although she were forced sometimes for their sakes to substract necessa-

ries

ries from her ſelfe. Beſides there were 900. beggars daily nouriſhed by her almes; but aboue all she tooke ſpeciall care for the funerallsand burials of ſuch poore people as were not able to prouide for themſelues.

Theſe acts of ſo notable charity God almighty shewed both to be gratefull to himſelfe, and alſo not preiudiciall to her husbands ſtate; as the following examples will shew. For once being much importuned by ſome poore people for almes, and hauing not any other thing to giue, she gaue them her mantell which was very rich, which the Prince miſſeing asked for it, the Saincte confidently anſwered that it hung thereby, as experience did verify. At another time the prince being in great anxietie

of

of mind, for that she had not apparell beseeming her qualitie, especially in such a time as there came vnto him an Embassadour from the king her Father, she willed him not to be troubled, for that she did neuer care for such vanities; But the time being come, that she must descend to the Embassadour, loe she appeares in very rich apparell, adorned with such beauty that euery one was strucke into admiration, especially the prince, to whom demāding the reason she smiling said, our lord doth know how to prepare such things when he pleaseth. About the yeare 1225. there fell a great dearth through the whole country, when her husband being abroade she gathers all the corne she could get, and most bountifully imparts it

to

to the poore, so that she emptied all the princes barnes, and storehouses, which notwithstanding were found to be as they were before.

It is too hard to expresse her great deuotion at Masse and other diuine offices, her feruent and pious aspirations, her pietie in the time of communion, wherein she was many times seene to shine with a great light and brightnesse. And although she spent her whole time very religiously, yet more particularly she obserued the lent with fastings, almes, and prayers, adding frequent disciplines; and on maundy thirsday poorely clad she visited the churches, washing with great deuotion the feet of twelue poore woemen, and after ward gaue them liberall almes. Shee

ostentiues went the processions barefoot.

The fame of these and such like vertues came to the eares of our seraphicall *S. Francis*, who for her comfort by the commandement of the Cardinall protectour sent her his cloake, which she most deuoutly receiued. It seemes to me that this cloake was a misticall signe of what she was to be, to wit, not only one of his children, but a mother and patroneſſe of this third order, which the holy Father by this signe doth commend vnto her.

What she did after her husbands death.

§. 3.

NEwes cõming to her of the princes death she with a constant resolution said (teares sweet

ſweetly flowing from her eyes) If my Brother (ſo she called her huſband) be dead, hence forward the world shall die to me who am dead to the world. What she ſaid in words, she fullfild in deeds, for at that time the ouerſeers of her young ſonne (vnable as yet to ſucceed in his Fathers dominions) caſt her out of all, and banished her the court, not permitting her to come neare the Prince her ſonne; this confuſiō she willingly embraces, and no way either deſireing reuenge, or murmuring againſt it, she reioyced much, and with the Apoſtles gloried in tribulation. Wherein as we may behold her glorious humility, patience, and other vertues, ſo alſo the ~~fickle~~ eſtate of fortune. Shee who heretofore had beene wont to liue in princely pallaces, is now

glad

glad to creep into ſome poore cottage; she that had beene eſteemed, honoured, obeyed, and loued as one of the greateſt princeſſes of the world, is now deſpiſed, contemned, and derided of all, yea of thoſe whom formerly shee had relieued; she that was, wont to be clad in rich attires of gold, ſiluer, and pretious iewels, now walks in poore ragges, and cloathes embrodered perhaps with mire: she that accuſtomed to beſtow her almes ſo liberally on the poore, is now glad to begge her owne bread. Who would not take compaſſion of her!

After she had paſſed the winter in theſe ſufferances, lent comming on she redoubled her deuotions, wherein she found wonderfull ſweetneſſe, which she

was

was no way able to expresse, and therein had many reuelations aswell of our Sauiour, as of our B. lady. I will only set downe one or two. Once being in an extasie our lord appeared to her, & said, Dost thou desire to be with me, and I will be with thee. Whereto she answered, Let it be so my lord, as thou dost wouchsafe to be with me, so also I will remaine with thee, and be neuer separated from thee. Our B. lady appeared vnto her very frequently, and did instruct her how God doth impart benefits to his beloued by many tribulations, and how by his grace which he giueth them he maketh their soules more capable of greater grace, whilst they out of a holy humilitie doe as it were become diffident of receiueing such and so great bene-

fits

fits, which he dayly more and more beſtoweth on them. And thereupon ſhe counſelled her to committ her ſelfe to the diuine will and goodneſſe, and attribute more to the power of God, than to her owne indignitie. The ſame was alſo manifeſted to the ſaint by a very rare miracle, for being one day walking with her ghoſtly Father called *Br. Roderingus*, they fell into a ſerious diſcourſe of the ſpirituall progreſſe that a ſoule might make in perfection; amongſt other things the holy woman ſaid, Reuerend Father amongſt all my troubles and difficulties of minde, there is none ſo nerely touches me, as that I am doubt full of the beneuolence and goodneſſe of my creatour towards me, not that I doe not know him to be the ſoueraigne good,

good, and liberall in his loue towards vs, but that I find my demerits to be such, that I shall and ought to bee reiected, although I burne with his loue. Whereto the Father answered, you haue no reason to feare, for so great is the diuine goodnesse, that without all doubt he loues againe much more than he is loued by any. But she replied; how then doth he suffer me to be drawne away from him by afflictions and sicknesse at any time or any moment, whereas I would alwaies and in all places adhere to him. *Br Roderingus* answered, Those are rather signes of one that is beloued of God, than of one forsaken by him: for he doth permit them to encrease your loue to him as also your merit. And in signe hereof, the more to confirme

you

you herein, in the vertue of his name, whome you loue, I command that tree which is on the other ſide of the riuer, to come to this ſide where we are: which was preſently done. Whereupon the ſaint fell at the Fathers feet craueing pardon for her offence.

The while theſe things were done ſome of her friẽds were thinking to helpe her, and to allow her ſome honourable meanes, and alſo prouide for her ſome noble marriage. But she, not againſt her will as they thought, but volũtarily both poore and ſolitary, mãfully refuſed all, ſaying, I am cõfident in the diuine protection, that what I haue vowed whilſt my huſband liued, I shall not looſe now that he is dead, what ſoeuer authoritie preſſe me, or friendſhip flatter me, I will not ſuffer

that

that to be taken from me by men which I haue begunne for God alone, neither doe I feare any violence, for it is alwayes free to me with my will to dissent from it, and to make my face more deformed, or euen to cut of my nose. O heroicall resolution, rather she wil loose her life than leaue the promise she had made to God.

How the holy Woman tooke vpon her a religious course of life.

§. 4.

ALL things neuertheless being well composed, and sufficient meanes giuen her to maintaine her selfe, she was nothing altered thereby from her former resolution, to liue after a poore manner, in so much that her nobilitie condemned her, esteeming her

her as a foole or ſuperſtitious idiot. She was indeed to the wicked a deriſion and mocking-ſtocke, but to the godly and iuſt she was in great veneration. Whence Pope *Gregorie the* 9. hearing the fame of her vertues, writ to her, takeing her as his daughter vnder the protection of the Apoſtolicall See, and commending her to *Conradus* (a Friar as ſome will haue it) a very holy man, that he should inſtruct her what she was to doe, where with the Saint was much ſtrengthened and confirmed, moſt willingly ſubmitting her ſelfe to his direction. *Conradus* then perſuaded her to the contempt of the world, and the following of Chriſt, which she very willing to doe, to the end she might execute it in ſome ſure and conſtant courſe of life,

she

she made choise of this order of S. *Francis*, to liue accordingly in holy and euangelicall pouertie, which not without seeming reluctation her ghostly Father approued, especially seeing her so earnestly & with teares to beg it. And vpon a good Friday before the altar in the Friar minors Church, by a solemne profession she renounced parents, children, pompes, and vanities of the world, and her proper will, to follow our Lord, but being about to giue away all her meanes *Conradus* would not permit it.

Not long after for the loue of her ghostly Father, that she might better enioy his good instructiõs she went to *Marburge*, where she began an hospitall, which by commandement of *Pope Gregory the 9.* she dedicated to S. *Francis*.

The

The Pope at that time ſent her ſome of the bloud, that flowed frō the ſide of the ſaid ſaint when he was marked with the holy ſtigmats.

In this hoſpitall she aſpires to a higher kind of life, and with a ſpirituall emulation endeauours to imitate the Friar Minors in a noble contempt of all things, takeing their ſtate of life and habit as much as she could; as ſaith S. *Bonauenture* in a ſermon of this ſaint. She made profeſſion of the third order of *S. Francis*, as appeares in the Bull of her canonization, and renouncing the world had her haire cut of, and thence forward went barefoot, girding her ſelfe with a cord: the habit that she with two or three more did take, was gray, humble and poore, whereby she

embraced perfect continency, and voluntarie pouertie. The R. Father *Pelbartus* in one of his sermons vpon this saint, saith that she contemned the world and entred into the third order of *S. Francis* to liue in chastitie, obedience, and so strict pouertie, that she did alwayes weare gray, and patched garmēts. Her father hearing she was come to so great pouertie sent for her by an earle, who when he saw her cried out *Is this the king of Hungaries daughter?* We may wel say, no: for she is now the beloued daughter of *S. Francis*, whose pouertie she imitates.

I must here, to auoid prolixity, omit her great charitie towards the poore in this place, her familiarity, and benigne comportment towards her inferiours, as also

alſo her miracles. It is admirable to conſider her poore life, her pietie towards the ſicke, as alſo towards leapers (in whoſe forme Chriſt appeared once vnto her) which was not vnrewarded by almighty God, who by her prayers did heale very many of all manner of diſeaſes, aſwell corporall as ſpirituall. With ſuch and ſo great ſignes of vertue this ſaint was adorned that it is impoſſible to declare all. As she faithfully exerciſed the office of *Martha*, ſo she omitted not the quiet reſt of *Marie*, when workes of pietie and domeſticall charge did ceaſe, then her ſpirit was moſt at worke, for then she goes to ſome ſecret place, and lifting vp her eies, hands, and heart to God, powers forth her prayer with feruent intention, and that with

teares of compunction, wherein she had a ſingular grace. Neither was she vnexperienc't in contemplation, for oftentimes she was rapt in extaſie for many houres together, wherein her face did appeare shining with admirable ſweetneſſe and luſtre, and at ſuch times not only enioyed the colloquie of Angels, but alſo of Chriſt Ieſus himſelfe, compaſſed about with an innumerable company of ſaints, after which time being ſufficiently refreshed with ſpirituall food, she would taſt no corporall food for many dayes together.

But now the time drawing on, wherein she muſt poſſeſſe him eternally, he ioyfully appeared vnto her ſaying, *veni electa mea, & cæleſti thalamo, quem tibi ab æterno deſtinaui, ponere.* Come my cle-

elected ſpouſe, and enioy the celeſtial bed chamber, which I haue prepared for thee from all eternitie. Being much reioyced at this viſion she went to *Conradus*, and recounted vnto him what had happened, and within foure dayes after fell ſicke. Drawing neere to her death, she would ſometimes ſwanlike ſing moſt melodiouſly, being aſſiſted thereto by angels: ſometimes againe ſends forth all thoſe that were about her, that (as she ſaid) she might remember her iudge, and the terrible cenſure, that shortly she was to heare: ſometimes againe she would beginne ſome pious diſcourſe of the life or miracles of out Sauiour, and at other times she would vtter ſuch inflaming and penetrating words, that they forc't all the hearers into

teares. God permitted the Enemie to appeare to her, but she with a constant minde cryed out, Fly ô miserable that thou art, fly vnhappy one, thou hast nothing to doe in me. And being in her last agonie she said; This is the houre of the virginall and immaculate birth of our Sauiour (for it was about midnight) admonishing her assistents to speake something of the most beautifill child *Iesus*. How he was borne in winters night, and in anothers house, swadled in cloathes, placed in a manger, found of the sheapheards, declared by the starre, and lastly adored by the Chaldeans. These, sayd she, are the venerable misteries, most rich benefits, and beautifull ornaments of our saluation. In these our hope taketh force, our

faith

faith doth profit vs, and our charitie enflame vs. Of these I pray discourse and sweetly conferre. In which words she gaue vp the ghost.

What miracles God hath wrought by her, both past and future ages will testifie, what is sayd may suffice for our purpose, Those authors who with more eloquence haue described her life, can manifest at more leasure her innumerable miracles. Only I will note here that she left foure Images of our *B. Lady* with her daugher *Sophia*, which be all miraculous, especially that of our lady of Hall neare *Brusselles*, and that of Vilford neare Brusselles also, commonly called our lady of comfort.

The translation of S. Elizabeth

§. 5.

AFter her Canonization which was in the yeare 1235. by *Gregorie the* 9. her fame was diuulged through all Germany. So that *Siffridus* archbishop of Ments in the yeare following, ordained the first day of May with great ioy of the people to take vp the most holy body out of the graue where it was. It is incredible to belieue how great a multitude of all sorts of people were gathered together at *Marburg*; the like was hardly euer seene in those parts; some doe report they came to twelue hundred thousand persons. The offerings that were there presented were not to be valued.

valued. The Emperour *Fredericke the second* was present, (and dedicated a crowne of gold to the holy reliques) with many other princes, archbishops, Abbots, and such like. And before them all the tombe was opened, from whence came forth a most gratefull odour, which did make all those that felt it very ioyfull, the body taken vp was put into a faire shrine, and carried with great pompe to the great ioy and content of all the people. But which is more to be admired, there came forth out of her body a certaine oyle, which cured all manner of diseases, insomuch that, as *Alberinus*, who hath written the chronicles of Germany, saith, there came almost as many to her shrine, as to *S. Iames of Compostella*.

Thus I haue briefely runne ouer the life of this glorious saint, that in part I might shew, with what good reason the religious and other professours of this order haue taken her for their Patronesse, as one that was a perfect disciple of *S. Francis*, and the first canonised saint of this order, yea except *S. Antony of Padua* the first child *S. Francis* had, that was enroled in the number of saints, and the first that made the three essentiall vowes of religion. From her this holy order began to take its happy progresse to the glory of God, and honour of this saint. And in signe that she was patronesse of this order, the religious of this order were wont to celebrate her feast with an octaue, as may be gathered out of the Bull of Pope *Leo the 10. Cum*

alias

alias. Wherein he grants leaue to celebrate Maſſe, and the diuine office euen in the time of interdiction through the whole octaue of S. *Elizabeth*, in the ſame manner, as the order did celebrate the feaſts, and octaues of S. *Clare*, which is not ordinarily granted, vnleſſe they were patrons or patroneſſes.

The sixteenth Chapter.

Of the life and death of Bleſſed S. Lewis king of France.

THis glorious ſaint was borne of bleſſed parents, to wit, of *Lewis the* 8. king of France, and *Blancha* queene of Caſtile, both holy perſons, in the yeare 1215. being

being obtained of almightie God by the interceſſion of our *B. lady*. For his deuout mother (who alſo was of this third order) grieuing that she had no children to ſucceed in the kingdome, was perſuaded by S. *Dominicke* to implore the aide and helpe of the *B. virgin*, and to that end inſtructed her the manner of ſaying the Roſarie, which had newly begunne. Her prayers were not without fruit, for she obtained her deſire, in enioying ſo bleſſed an ofſpring, who at twelue years old was crowned king of France, yet remained vnder the protection of his mother, who would often inculcate theſe words vnto him, *My moſt deare ſonne, I had rather thou shouldeſt vndergoe a temporall death, than by one mortall ſinne offend thy creatour.* Which words tooke

tooke ſuch root in his mind, that Gods grace ſo preſeruing him he neuer ſinned mortally in his life, his mother ſtill inſtructing him in the way of vertue, and procureing alwayes ſome religious men, eſpecially Franciſcans and Dominicans to be with him, that by their example he might be drawne to vertue and pietie.

And being now of age fit for marriage she prouided a wife for him, to the great ioy and comfort of all his ſubiects, but for three nights after his marriage he ſtill continued in prayer, bridling his coniugall deſire with the feare of God, and euer after liued moſt chaſtly with his queene. Hee was greatly addicted vnto pietie and deuotion, daily ſaying the canonicall houres, and much loued humilitie, pouertie, charitie, pa-

tience

tience, and other vertues, ſtudyeing the workes of pennance, and mercy, liuing in watchings, prayers, faſtings, diſciplines, and haircloath, and continually meditateing on the ſacred miſteries of the Incarnation, and Paſſion of our Sauiour; the principall inſtruments whereof he from all places procured, as that of the crowne of thornes, great part of the Croſſe, the Iron of the lance that opened our Sauiours ſide, with many others.

He was very deuout in hearing Maſſe, and did communicate often, and that with ſuch deuotion, that he would allure others to pietie, ſo ſtrong in faith thereto, that being one time called to behold an apparition of a moſt beautifull child, when the prieſt did eleuate the holy Sacrament,

he refuſed to goe to ſee it, ſaying that ſuch ſignes were for thoſe that did not beleeue.

Out of his great zeale of Gods honour he went forth to make warre with the Sarazens, wherein at the firſt he properouſly proceeded, but in the end, God ſo willing, he was taken priſoner, but by compoſition being ſet at libertie, in his returne God by his prayer deliuered both himſelfe and his company from ship-wracke. And as in this he shewed his feruent deſire to reduce thoſe infidels to the light of faith, ſo he alwayes did defend the Church againſt its enemies, he loued and maintained all religious orders, eſpecially thoſe of the Friar minors and Preachers; but was a ſeuere enemie to all heretickes, euen to the houre of his death,

for

for on his death bed it was one of his last and greatest charges he gaue to his sonne. *Fili*, saith he, *sis deuotus & obediens matri nostræ Romanæ Ecclesiæ, & summo Pontifici tanquam Patri spirituali*, be deuout and obedient to our mother the Romane Church, and to the Soueraigne bishop as to a spirituall Father.

It is reported of him, that going in pilgrimage to Rome, he passed by Perusia to see Brother *Giles* one of the companions of our holy Father, a man of great contemplation, who by reuelation vnderstanding of his comming, and meeting the king in a disguised habit (for he went in a pilgrimes weed) he presently most ioyfully receiued him, and both falling prostrate to each other, and both rising together af-

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ter an houres ſpace they went one from another. Brother *Giles* being demanded why he did not ſpeake to the king ſith he knew him, he anſwered we ſaw one anothers hearts ſo clearely, that it was not needfull to ſpeake any thing.

Omitting many other moſt excellent things in his life, I will conclude with his death, which was thus. In the yeare 1270. hauing receiued all the Sacraments of the Church with great deuotion, and caſting himſelfe proſtrate on the ground with a haire-cloath and ashes vnder him, holding his hands ſtretched forth in the forme of a Croſſe, he gaue vp the Ghoſt, and afterward shined with many miracles, eſpecially that of curing the diſeaſe commonly called the kings Euill,

and

and as ſome will haue it, from him all the ſucceeding kings haue that vertue. For the great vertues and miracles that God wrought by this ſaint, he was canoniſed by *Pope Bonifacius the* 8. in the yeare 1298. And that he was of this third order is manifeſt by all the ancient monuments of our order, the whole order hauing alwayes celebrated his feaſt with peculiar rīght. And *Paulus* 3. in his Bull *Cum à nobis petitur.* 1547. numbers him amongſt the ſaincts of this third order. See the Martirologe of the Friar Minors on the 25. of Auguſt.

The seaventeenth Chapter.

The life of S. Iuo Patrone of the lawyers.

BLessed *S. Iuo* was borne of noble Parents neere Trecore in little Brittaine, in the yeare 1258. who at competent age was sent thēce to Paris, where hauing past his studies with praise, as well in humanitie as Philosophy, and diuinitie, he departed thence and went to Orleans to study the cannon law, where fearing the occasion of place and companie, he began to exercise himselfe in the way of mortification and vertue, which much encreased his good fame and esteeme of all men, and made

made the Archdeane of Rhemes to chooſe him for to be his officiall, which office he performed with great applauſe. He euer cherished the poore, helped orphans, and comforted thoſe that were in any affliction, he was a great peacemaker, neuer giuing ſentence or iudgement but with teares accompanying it: as vnwilling to diſpleaſe any one.

In all things he did shew his great charitie to the poore and ſingular loue to God, for whoſe ſake he deſpiſed all the things of this world. Which that he might more perfectly effect, he tooke the habit of this third order, which humble ſtate made him to leaue his office or place, (although now he were officiall to the Bishop) and retire himſelfe to a poore little Parish Church, where with more

more freedome he might be attentiue to diuine contemplation. And now going in his poore habit, vnder which alſo he did weare a hairshirt, with moſt ſtrict faſts euen in bread and water, very frequently did remaine in extaſie, and ſometimes for the ſpace of ſeauen dayes together. He celebrated Maſſe with exceeding great deuotion, as alſo the diuine office, which he ſaid alwayes at midnight, very ſparing in ſleepe, ſeldome or neuer composeing himſelfe thereto, vnleſſe by reading, labouring, preaching, or ſuch like he was forced to it, and then in his habit, on the ground, taking for his pillow the Bible or ſome ſtone.

His great hoſpitalitie was the cauſe that his table neuer wanted gueſſe, and thoſe principally of the

the poorer ſort, ſick, or lame, in ſo much that if God had not miraculouſly prouided for him he could not haue ſuſtained it; and for ſuch vpon his owne charges and expenſes he would pleade and defend their cauſe, whereupon he was called *Aduocate of the poore.*

Notwithſtanding all this, beſides his continuall preachings with great fruit, he neuer omitted the quiet peace of minde, but addicted himſelfe to contẽplatiõ, wherein he was often viſited by Angels, by whome he had many things reuealed vnto him, and at laſt his owne death, whereto he prepared himſelfe with great deuotion, and with the generall opinion of ſanctitie confirmed afterwards by miracles. He was canonized in the yeare 1347. taken

ken by them of little Brittany as their Patron, who make vse of his name in time of battaile or conflicts, as we vse the name of *S. George.*

Finally that he was of the third order, is manifest by the statute made in the generall chapter of our order held at Lions, in the yeare 1351. where it was ordained, that his feast should be celebrated on the 27. of october which is the day of his translation. *Bernardinus a bustis*, the firmament of the three orders, and all the ancient writers of our order make mention of him.

I neede not here set downe the liues of Blessed *S. Elzear* and *S. Elizabeth* Queene of Portugall commonly called peace-maker, because they are both extant in our English language. Yet for the

the better content of the Reader, I will briefely runne ouer the liues of some beatified saints of this order, whose fame is more diuulged through the whole world.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Contayning the liues of some beatified saints of this order.

BLessed *S. Rose* from her infancie began to feare God giuing her selfe to feruent prayer, mortification, austeritie, and pennance; and would often substract from her selfe to giue to the poore, which God blessed so much, that she wrought miracles. Whilst she was but a child, by the admonishment of our

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Bleſſed lady, she tooke vpon her the habit of this third order, whereby she ſuffered great perſecution both from her father, friends, and cocitizens, for she was therefore exiled the cittie, though after ward by reaſon of her famous miracles and ſpirit of prophecie, she was brought backe againe with great honour. Where after many reuelations she died in the yeare 1251. namely at Viterbia, where she is famous to this day with innumerable miracles. Many Popes haue intended her canonization, and the citizens of Viterbia doe keepe her feaſt with great ſolemnitie on the 4. day of September. And that which moſt encreaſes the deuotion of the people, is, that her body whole and entire is at this day to be ſeene with haire

and nailes which doe continually grow, which the religious woemen of the monasterie where her body lies doe cut of, turning her body vp and downe without any detriment; and which is more miraculous in the yeare 1357. her tombe and all things that were in the chappell where the tombe was, yea the habit vpon her backe were consumed with fire, which was so vehement that it melted the rings from her finger without doing the least hurt to the holy body.

Blessed *S. Margaret of Cortona* was very beautifull & had beene giuen to wantonnesse, but conuerted to God, and lamenting her former life she began to despise all vanities, and carnall pleasures, and with effusion of teares did implore the mercy of God,

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applying her ſelfe to good workes, eſpecially of cõpaſſionating the poore, and out of her great deſire to lead a penitentiall life, she humbly begged the habit of the third order, which was denyed her for three yeares ſpace, aſwell in conſideration of her former life, as yongneſſe of yeares, but perſeuering in her firme purpoſe she obtained it at length in the yeare 1277. at *Cortona*, and began a new life, which was to be admired; for chooſing a ſolitarie place she addicted her ſelfe wholly to abſtinencies, faſtings, diſciplines, watchings, and continuall prayer, lyeing on the grouud, hauing a ſtone for her pillow. She went in a poore and humble habit, being full of charitie and pittie to the poore, oftentimes ſubſtracting from her

ſelfe to giue to them. And by the continuall meditation of the paſſion of our Sauiour she obtained the gift of compunction, weeping very frequently aſwell for her owne ſinnes, as alſo for the ſinnes of others. She was oftentimes troubled by the Diuell appearing to her in diuers formes, but was as often cõforted by our Sauiour, by our Bleſſed lady, and by the holy angels, and ſtrengthened by their celeſtiall viſitations; which made her as much to shine in moſt profound humilitie, and high pouertie, as in the loue of Chriſt: whereby she was often rapt in extaſies, and had many reuelations, whilſt she applyed her minde to the contemplation of diuine things. By the ſpirit of prophecy she did foretell things to come, and reueale the ſecrets

of

of many hearts and consciences, being very famous both in life and after her death for many miracles, euen to this our time, which made *Pope Vrbane the* 8. that now is, in the yeare 1623. to put her in the number of the Beatified, and to giue licence that the diuine office might be made of her through the whole order of *S. Francis.*

Of this order also was that great contemplatiue blessed *S. Angela* who in this penitentiall habit did vndertake a wonderfull strict way of pennance, wherein she was consolated by celestiall visions. Being much giuen to contemplation, for twelue yeares space she tooke no other food than the Blessed sacrament. Her body remaines at *Fulginea* whole and entire. She hath left behinde

her many excellent things, exceeding the ordinary capacitie of men which are extant in lattin, Italian, ſpanish, and French, and are to be deſired in our vulgar lãguage, if I doe it not (as I much deſire to doe) I pray God to raiſe ſome one that will performe it, as a worke very neceſſary for all religious perſons, thoſe principally who ſeeke the way of contemplation as this ſaint did.

I omit to ſpeake of many other beatified ſaincts, as of *S. Conradus*, whoſe office is ſerued in the whole order, and of *S. Roch* who is held as a canonized ſaint through the whole Church, with many others. I will now ſet downe briefly a catalogue of the principall religious woemen, who haue beene famous for ſanctitie and miracles in this order according

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ding to their yeares, which I haue collected out of the Martirologe of the Friar Minors. If any list to know more of thē they may, read the said martirologe and they shall find what Authors haue written of them.

The ninteenth Chapter.

Containing a briefe catalogue of the principall holy persons that haue beene in this order, since it came to be a perfect religious state.

ALthough there haue beene from the beginning of this holy order many that did liue in

a clauſtrall manner, the order it ſelfe euery day encreaſing more and more,& yeelding abũdãce of holy perſons, who haue profeſſed this holy rule, yet it neuer came to its full perfection, that is, to compleat and perfect ſtate of religion, vntill the time of bleſſed *Angeline*, (a diminitiue frõ *Angela* for diſtinction ſake, other wiſe she was alſo called *Angela*) who from being Counteſſe of Ciuitella became religious of this order. For hauing gathered together many noble yong woemen of the ſame minde with her ſelfe, shee built a monaſterie, and dedicated it to *S. Anne* in the yeare 1397. and entring therein with her aſſociats, hauing firſt made the three vowes of obedience, pouerty, and chaſtitie she did with ſanctitie perſeuer to the end

end of her life in fasting, prayer, and other exercises of pennance. By her example many other gathering their meanes together in short time did build eight monasteries in diuerse parts of Italy, and did liue vnder the habit and rule of the third order, which manner of life was approued and confirmed by the Popes *Martin.* 5 *Eugenius* 4. Not long after by their example many men did also build conuents liuing vnder the same habit and rule, with the three vowes of religion as they had done. This holy woman died on the day that Christ was borne, as our Sauiour appearing on *S. Thomas* his day had declared vnto her; and lies buried in the said monastery of *S. Anne* where she is worshipped with great reuerence of the people.

Amongſt the diſciples of this holy woman were many religious perſons famous for ſanctitie, *Iacobellus* principally notes three: to wit, bleſſed *Onuphria*, ſometimes counteſſe of Aprutia, and *B. Francis of Bulgaria*, of the houſe of the Earles of Marſican, and bleſſed *Ioane of Fulginea*, much renowned for pietie, vertue, regular obſeruance, and perfection of life, who afterward went to Florence, and there built the monaſterie of *S. Onuphrius*, ending their daies in great ſanctitie.

Bleſſed *Margaret Dominicke* was alſo one of them that tooke the habit from *S. Angeline*, and became a perfect follower of her vertues, for ſhe much excelled in prayer, humilitie, and contẽpt of her ſelfe, and did ſerue euery one as if ſhe had beene their ſubiect,

and

and with a ſincere heart and candide mind did reuerence all her ſiſters; her puritie was rather angelicall than humane, and her obedience ſuch that without the conſent of her ſuperiour she would doe or reſolue nothing, shewing no leſſe reſpect alſo to her ghoſtly Father. She tamed her flesh with abſtinence, faſtings, and haircloath, as being moſt zealous of her vowes; being full of charitie, she did helpe any of her ſiſters that were in neceſſitie, and willingly performe their wills. In the end the monaſterie of *S. Anne* being ouer filled with religious, the citizens of Fulginea did build another vnder the title of *S. Anne*, and this holy woman was made Abbeſſe therof, where she inſtructed her ſiſters in the beſt manner, and by her friends

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enlarged the monaſtery, which she moſt religiouſly gouerned, vntill she was called to Spoletum, where she began alſo another monaſterie, vnder the title of *S. Catharine*. Which done she was brought home to her former monaſterie, where she appeared more feruent, excerciſing her ſelfe in the workes of holy prayer, pennance, and mortification, whence after the death of *B. S. Angeline* she was called to ſucceede in her place, and therein began to shine with miracles, and there died with incredible patiẽce in her infirmitie, her body was placed in a shrine neere to the altar in the ſaid monaſterie of *S. Anne*, which was long times after found whole, and entire, yeelding a moſt fragrant odour, and shining with miracles.

Bleſ-

Blessed *Lucida* was one of the companions of *S. Magaret*, famous for regular obseruance and rare vertues. She was much delighted in the memorie of Christs Passion, and thereby merited to feele the dolour of the wounds of our Sauiour in her hands.

Blessed *Sanctia Martinez* was endowed with great humilitie and perfection of life. For after she had builded at her owne charges the monasterie of *S. Elizabeth* at Arenali in the yeare 1440. and laid a good foundation for the reuenues thereof became her selfe religious of this order, being of such examplar life, that all did striue to imitate her humilitie, being such that although she was borne of nobler parents, yet was she not ashamed to carry water vpon her shoulders through

the market place. And no lesse addicted she her selfe to austeritie and pennance, and so died with great opinion of sanctitie.

Blessed *Pyrona of flāders* did enter into the monasterie of the third order in Gāt, that there she might serue God more purely, and more freely giue her selfe to workes of pennance. She had the gift of compunction so copiously, that her eies were as a red cloth. She was very obedient to her superiours, florished in true pouertie, and did much labour to conserue her chastitie and keepe her mind and body free from all spot. After she had liued thus a long time with great sanctitie she got leaue of her Abbesse to goe and liue in an hermitage within the Church yard of *S. Nicholas*, neere to the towne, where she did shine with

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admirable ſanctitie, auſteritie of life, patience, and miracles, and knew the ſecret thoughts of the mindes of thoſe that came to her, and oftentimes made them knowne. She died in the yeare 1472.

Bleſſed *Mary Ruiz of Alcarazio* deſpiſeing all nuptiall rites tooke the habit of this order, and by her example did draw many others to her, and together with them by the authoritie of Pope *Innocent the* 8. did liue after a religious manner, changeing her houſe into a monaſterie in the yeare 1486. And liuing vnder the obedience of the Prouinciall of the Friar Minors, with abundance of merits and vertues, moſt religiouſly died hauing before foretold the time of her death.

About the ſame time liued Bleſ-

Blessed *Beatrix Hermosilla* who together with her Ant did study to perfection, nothing esteeming the world and pompe therof, whatsoeuer they could get, they did distribute to the poore, and by their labours with helpe of the citizens did erect the monasterie of *S. Elizabeth* in Castile, where with other virgins and woemen they made profession of this third order, and with great sanctitie of life liued and died therein, in the yeare 1485. Her bones were taken vp 47. yeares after, being fresh, and yeelding a very sweet sent, and being translated to a more conuenient place very many miracles were wrought before them, which gaue occasion to the people to shew great deuotion vnto them.

B. Aldonza Lopetia of noble

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race, by the helpe of the cittizens of Arenali in the yeare 1490. began the monasterie of our lady, after wards through the sanctitie of the holy woeman called the monasterie of Aldonza, for that she was the first Abbesse of this house, who had the spirit of prophecie, working miracles both in her life and after her death.

Blessed *Vraca Roderiguez of Vlmes* of most noble parentage, and exceeding rich, entring into a a Church where she heard the words of our Sauiour, *si vis perfectus esse, vade & vende omnia quæ habes, & da pauperibus*, tooke them as said to her selfe, and so bestowed much part of her meanes vpon religious houses, builded an hospitall, conuerting her owne house into a monasterie, and giuing all the rest to the poore. Afterward

terward she with fiue of her neeces, and three other gentlewoemen entred into this order about the yeare 1491. None was more chast than she, none more vigilant. She exceld all the rest in patience, meekenesse, mercie, humilitie, and dayly labours, and at last replenished with merits, and sanctitie died, & lies buried in the monasterie she had erected.

About the same time liued Blessed *Agnes à ferro* who sometime did attend on the Queene of Aragonia, but afterward being weary of the world, and despiseing the vaine honours thereof, became religious of this third order, liuing in great pouertie, humilitie, and sanctitie.

In the yeare 1500. Blessed *Anne of Arcualo* was famous for sanctitie in the monasterie of *S. Elizabeth*, of the third order of *S. Francis*

Francis, where she liued for a hundred yeares in exceeding great humilitie, patience, abstinence, prayer, and charitie.

About the same yeare liued Blessed *Clare of Fulginea* famous for pietie, and deuotion, being very zealous of regular obseruance, and often deseruing to be comforted in apparitions by the seraphicall Father *S. Francis*.

About the yeare 1515. florished Blessed *Catharine Ruiz*, whose charitie in assisting the sicke sisters was admirable, spending all that euer she could get for them, yea begging for them, and thereby became famous for sanctitie.

Blessed *Anna Sanchez* was one of her companions, whose deuotion and continuall prayer was much to be admired, yet she was of an excellent prudence for gouernement,

uernement, and therfore was ſent to be mother or Abbeſſe in the Cloyſter of S. *Clement* from whence after she had beene there 20. yeares with great labours and toiles, leauing the moſt fragrant odour of her ſweet conuerſation she returned to her former place, where broken and wearied with pennances, faſtings, and continuall prayers, she died with great ſanctitie, the cell and bed wherein she died, did for ſometime after shine with a great light to the great admiration of thoſe that beheld it.

About the ſame time alſo liued in Placentia Bleſſed *Baptiſta* famous in her life for many vertues, and after her death for many miracles, eſpecially for that her body remaining entire doth yeeld a moſt ſweet and pleaſing ſmell.

In the yeare 1519. liued *B. Ma-*

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ria Pennaloſa in the monaſterie of *S. Elizabeth* in Segouia, a woman of a very religious ſpirit, in humilitie, prayer, and charitie hardly to be equaliſed, who as it is commonly reported, in her life time did obtaine life for a yong man that was dead, for which and other things ſhe is worshipped there with great deuotion.

About the ſame time B. *Elizabeth Pontia* together with her two daughters, both alſo holy woemen began the monaſterie of S. *Anne* in the prouince of Carthage, and by their example did draw many others to Religion. And as in their life they had the generall opinion of ſanctitie, ſo after their death their Reliques haue deliuered many that had beene poſſeſſed, as alſo cured many diſeaſes.

Bleſſed Franciſca of S. *Anne* in

the

the yeare 1525. was brought from the monasterie where she had made profession of the third order, to the monasterie of the annuntiation at Grinion, in the dioceſſe of Toledo, that she might giue a beginning therto, and inſtruct others that were to come in regular diſcipline; and as she had beene abbeſſe of the former place, ſo was she abbeſſe of this with wõderfull fruit of ſoules; for she did excell in prudence, charitie, pietie, humilitie, affabilitie, modeſtie, abſtinence, and monaſticall obſeruance.

B. Lucie about the yeare 1530. did found the monasterie of S. *Clare* vnder the rule of the third order, and was very famous for perfection of life and miracles. Her body is had in great eſtimation with the faithfull in thoſe parts.

About

About this time liued Blessed *S. Ioane* of the holy Crosse, whose admirable life is set forth in our vulgar language, and therefore here omitted.

B. Francis liued in the same time of whom *Gonzaga* thus writes. This most vertuous and religious sister *Francis* was a child of the third order of saint *Francis*, who declining from the innumerable deceits of the fiend, did get a glorious victorie ouer Sathan, and therefore was much feared by him.

B. Aldonza about the yeare 1566. was famous for sanctitie, and after hauing beene abbesse, when the sisters were to remoue, she prayed that she might die in the same place, which she obtained, and six yeares after her death her body was found whole and entire,

entire, yeelding a fragrant odour, wherefore she was held in great veneration.

Blessed *Marie Gonsalue* in the yeare 1577. died with great opinió of sanctitie, after she had foũded a monasterie of this third order, wherein she lead a life of great perfection, aswell in seruing the poore as in compassionating their miseries and wants, she did alwayes sleep without any bed vnder her, exactly obseruing the fasts of the whole yeare with rigorous and bloudy disciplines.

Blessed *Olalia Grincsia* was famous for sanctitie about the yeare 1583. For entring into this order, and therein desiring the height of pennance, she was not contented with the ordinary austerities of her order, but inuented new fastings all the lents and vigils, in bread

bread and water, and three times in the weeke did take bloudy disciplines; being much addicted to pouertie, and humilitie, she would willingly serue all, and continually did meditate on our lords Passion, and not without teares. Lastly falling into a dropsy, now fourscore yeares old she died most blessedly. The sisters by her reliques did cure very many diseases.

About the same time liued *B. Clare Martineira* whose abstinences, fastings, watchings, teares, haircloaths, rigorous disciplines, humble exercises, feruent prayers, mortificatiõs, pious workes, most great temptations, deuout actiõs, celestiall visions, diuine fauours, frequent miracles both in her life and after her death are set downe by *Daza*.

And leaſt I be ouer tedious in rehearſing ſo many holy perſons, to omitte many others which may be ſeene in the martyrologe amounting to two hundred & vpwards, I will conclude this chapter with Bleſſed *Innocentia*, who liued in theſe our times, and died in the yeare 1624. This Bleſſed virgin of noble parents in Cicilie, from her infancy gaue her ſelfe to pietie, vertue, and temperance, obſeruing the faſts very ſtrictly, and deſpiſeing the pompe and vanitie of this world, out of her great deſire of perfection entred into this third order, giuing very good example of humilitie, pouertie, chaſtitie, and obedience. And by her continuall meditation she was ſo enflamed with the fire of diuine loue, eſpecially when she communicated, that she was often rapt into

rapt into extasie. Her body remaines as yet whole and entire giuing a most sweet odour, which made Pope *Vrbane* the 8. that now sits in the seat of *S. Peter* to giue cõmand that inquirie should be made of her life, death, and miracles for a future Canonization, which we deuoutly expect. And in the meane time goe forward to our intended purpose.

The twentyth Chapter.

How Pope Leo the 10. accomodated the Rule of this third order to religious persons.

HAuing shewed before how his order began, and what pro-

progreſſe it hath made from time to time, it will be eaſy to vnderſtand what the Pope did intend, when-in the prologue of this Rule, he ſaith, *But foraſmuch as by courſe of time through the inſpiration of the holy Ghost not only married perſons, and ſuch as dwell in the world, but alſo quires of innumerable virgins, taking vpon them the three eſſentiall vowes, and alſo ſome of them that of enclosure, by our authoritie building very many monaſteries, not without manifold fruit, and edification of the Church militant, haue ſubdued their neckes vnder the yoake of the foreſaid third order &c.* Which words haue beene occaſion that I haue produced ſome of the moſt famous woemē and virgins that haue beene in this order, the fame of their ſanctitie hauing beene the reaſon &

motiue

motiue of the abbreuiating, reforming, and accomodating of this Rule to religious persons.

For the Pope as Father of all Christians, and particularly of religious persons, by his office is to haue a care of the conseruation, propagation, and encrease of Gods honour on all occasions, as a Father of the familie is to prouide sufficiēt meanes to satisfie the necessitie of those that be vnder his charge, therfore to him as to our iudge we are to haue recourse in all doubts and difficulties, frō his tribunal seat to receiue the finall sentence, he also as superiour is to giue vs lawes and precepts which we are to obserue, as one that hath power from God to command all, in as much as tends to our soules good, and from him we receiue all rules with their

approbation, declaration, and confirmation.

Pope *Leo* in the prologue of this Rule, as a Father doth write to his ſonnes and daughters of this order, putting them in mind, what intention they ought to haue in the obſeruance of this Rule, to wit to reduce themſelues in as much as the ſtate of this life will permit, to the ſame innocencie wherein man was created, and as a Father of a familie prouides for them competent meanes to obtaine that perfection, and like a Paſtour doth propound vnto thē true food of their ſoules, which ſtrengthens them in their hard courſe of life, and laſtly as a ſupreame iudge to whom the religious of this order haue made their appeale, he ordaines lawes, and precepts, whereby they are

to

to liue giuing them a rule accomodated to their ſtate.

For the Pope ſeeing the great encreaſe of this order, out of his paſtorall care and great affection which he did beare to this order did renew, authenticate, confirme, and approue this rule, omitting thoſe things that were not conformable to a religious ſtate, and making it more propre to deuout religious ſoules, leauing moſt ample ſcope to thoſe that are their ſuperiours or haue gouernement of them, to adde or ioyne any thing by ordinations, ſtatutes, or conſtitutions, that might tend to the better obſeruance of this rule, and aduancement of the profeſſours thereof in the way of perfection. Which indeed is no ſmall dignitie and credit to this order, ſith the ſu-

preame paſtour and head of Gods Church hath vouchſafed to condeſcend ſo low, as to examine, conſider, compare, declare, confirme, and approue their rule by his ſoueraigne authoritie, propound it vnto the world, as obſeruable iuſt, lawfull, and good. And to this rule ſuperiours euen by the Popes authoritie haue added certaine ſtatutes for their better gouernement in the way of perfection.

From whence proceedeth that great diuerſitie and varietie in this third order. For although all of them acknowledge. *S. Francis* for their patrone, and militate vnder the ſame rule; yet the varietie of ſtatutes and manner of life proceeding from the diuerſitie of ſuperiours hath cauſed ſuch diuerſitie in their habit and manner

of

of life that in apparence they seeme not to be of the same order, each monasterie being so much the more perfect, by how much more absolute and perfect is their gouernement by statutes ordained to that end by those that haue care of them.

THE 21. CHAPTER.

How this Rule is a Rule of pennance.

THE words of Pope *Leo* in the foresaid prologue haue beene the ground of this question. For he saith, that Pope *Nicholas the* 4. had confirmed and approued the third rule of *S. Francis*, which he tearmeth of pennance, by

which the holy confeſſour of Chriſt full of Gods ſpirit laboured to further the ſaluation of all faithfull Chriſtians. Some foolishly haue taken occaſion hereat to derogate from this order, as if it were only for penitents or repentants, that had committed ſome great vice, but truely although it were ſo, it would be ſo farre from diminishing the eſteeme therof, that happy are thoſe who shall be amongſt thoſe true conuertes who are called penitents of *S. Magdalen* or repentants, who notwithſtanding are not of this order as may be ſeene in that which followes.

Wherfore the word *Pennance* is taken diuerſly, ſometimes for the Sacrament of pennance, ſometimes for ſatisfaction, as it is the third part of the Sacrament,

ſome-

ſometimes for punishment of ſinne, ſometimes for interiour ſorrow, which is threefold, to witt, in habit, in act, and in paſſion that followes the act. Here in this place we take it as an act, or habit of pennance, which is a morall vertue, whereby a ſinner deteſteth ſinne and labours to auoid all the occaſions of ſinne, and thoſe that frequently vſe ſuch acts are ſaid to lead a penitentiall life. Such an one was that penitentiall king *Dauid*, who in a few words doth briefely explicate it, ſaying *pſal.* 4. *Be yee angrie, and ſinne not, the things that you ſay in your hearts, and in your chambers, be yee ſorry for, ſacrifice yee the ſacrifice of Iuſtice.* The royall prophet hauing perſuaded all to leaue the vanitie of this world, and not to follow lies, shewes the way how

how they should doe it, first they must take a holy anger and indignation against sinne, and against the things of this world; secondly they must make a firme and resolute purpose thenceforward to avoid all sinne, euill desires, vitious inclinations; and wicked suggestions of the Diuell, the world, and the flesh; and lastly labour to doe well, by offering to God the iust and due sacrifice of all their actions, the continuance whereof in diuers places of the psalmes he insinuates, as when he saith, I haue laboured in my sighing, I will euery night wash my bed, I will water my couch with my teares; as if he should say, I will continually afflict my selfe with pennance, and will neuer cease from this thought of my sinnes, but night

and

and day I will shed forth teares of compunction to wash away mine offences, I did eat ashes as bread and mingled my drinke with weeping. The prophet *Ioel* c. 2. inuites all to the same, *Conuertimini ad me in toto corde, in ieiunio, & in fletu, & in planctu* Be conuerted to me in all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning; that is, be ye conuerted to me your God by pennance with your whole heart, with all your soule, with all your spirit, with all your affection, which ye may best doe by fasting, whereby the sinnes of the flesh and gluttonie are punished, and in weeping and mourning, whereby with teares ye deplore your ingratitude towards your good God. This pennance was denounced vnto vs by all the prophets,

phets, but in a more eminent manner declared and practiſed by that moſt holy forerunner of our Sauiour *B. Saint Iohn Baptiſt*, whoſe office was to preach pennance by word and example; of whom S. *Bernard* ſaith, *The auſteritie and ſtrict courſe of life of holy S. Iohn Baptiſt is a hard meſſenger of eternall death vnto delicious and wanton perſons.* And *S. Chryſoſtome*; The habit of his body might preach the vertues of his mind &c. The Apoſtles tought the ſame. *S. Iohn Climacus* hath notable examples in this kind. The holy hermits that liued in the deſarts did shine with pennance, alwaies leading a ſtrict penitentiall life. And to omit infinite others, let one *S. Francis* ſerue for all, who after his conuerſion did lead a moſt auſtere life

life of pennance. For putting on the armour of the Croſſe he did ſubdue all his ſenſuall appetites with ſuch rigour of diſcipline, that he ſcarce tooke what was neceſſarie for his ſuſtentation; for (ſaid he) it is hard to ſatisfie the neceſſities of the body, and not yeeld to ſenſuall inclination. And therfore being in health he did ſeldome eat any dreſſed meates, and when he did, he put to ashes or water for ſauce; and very rarely too taking water enough to ſuffice nature. He ſtill inuented new wayes to afflict his body, his bed being for the moſt part the ground or earth, his pillow a blocke or ſtone. With ſuch and many the like mortifications did he arme him ſelfe to conuert the whole world, and to draw it to pennance whereof he became a prea-

preacher both by word and example. And this is all the knowledge his sermons tend vnto: let other saints and Doctours preach the high points of speculatiue, misticall, or morall diuinitie; let others abound in eloquence and fertile conceits of holy misteries; let them teach the sublime misterie of the holy Trinity, and other articles of our faith; let them explicate the sublime gifts which God imparts to deuout soules, or other such curious points; *S. Francis* hath but one sermon of pennance, alwayes repeating and inculcating the same, after the example of *S. Iohn Baptist* and of his Master *Christ Iesus*; knowes not how to speake any other language; his text, exordium, narration, peroration or conclusion is of pennance, which he alwayes preaches, whilst his very life

life is a continuated ſermon of pennance. The fruict whereof was ſuch, that the whole world would needs follow his example, which made him for the ſatisfaction of all to make certaine rules of pennance. All the ſentences, counſels, and commandements of the firſt Rule ſauour of nothing elſe but pennance, and the profeſſours thereof, as wel noteth *S. Bonauenture*, were Preachers of Pennance. The ſecond rule of no leſſe auſteritie and pennance he gaue to the poore Clares. But this patriarcke of pennance had not thus giuen way and meanes to all, for ſome had not ſtrength and abilitie to vndertake ſuch rigorous auſterities, who notwithſtanding forced by his example and words muſt needes take ſome rule and manner of life, that they might doe

doe pennance for their ſinnes. And this rule or method of liueing did the holy Father accomplish, calleing it the rule of pennance or order of penitents, ſo that the whole order of *S. Francis* is an order of pennance, and all his children are penitents, and thoſe that are not ſo, deſerue not to be eſteemed his diſciples. So that the firſt order in the beginning were called preachers of pennance, but afterward for the more humilitie the Saint would haue them called *Friar Minors*, a name of humilitie, dependence, and ſubmiſſion, which is the higheſt condition of a Friar minor. The vulgar people alſo ſtiled the now called poore Clares or poore dames, religious penitents : only the name of penitents remaines to the third

order

order, whose rule is commonly called the rule of pennance, and their order stiled the order of pennance, as here the Popes Holinesse entitles it.

The 22. Chapter.

Containing a declaration of the state of Innocency.

MY reader perhaps will admire, why I propound this discourse so farre differing from my subiect, but let him please to consider that my intention is to explicate the things that are contayned in the prologue of the rule; which the Pope thus beginneth. *Among other things committed to our charge and gouernement,*

 A declaration of the third nement, thoſe chiefily doe make vs ſollicitous, by which the concupiſcences of the world and flesh being bridled, the quiet ſtate of innocence and peace giuen vs from heauen is knowen to be reduced to its originall ſtate and perfection. Intimating that by a religious ſtate man may be reduced to the quiet ſtate of innocencie, which cannot well be explicated, if firſt we ſet not downe what the ſtate of innocency was, and how we haue fallen from it.

As for the firſt, we cannot better declare it than by its effects, which principally were ſeauen; the firſt was wiſdome and perfect knowledge of all things; the ſecond grace, amitie or friendship with God: the third originall iuſtice; the fourth immortalitie and impaſſibilitie; the

the fifth the inhabitation of paradiſe, where they might eat of the tree of life; the ſixth a ſpeciall care that God had of them; the ſeauenth and laſt freedome from all luſt and concupiſcence. *S. Bernard* contemplating this ſtate of Innocency in his 35. Sermon vpon Canticles ſaith, that Adam did dwell in the terreſtriall paradiſe, a place of more happyneſſe than any mortall creature could deſire, his conuerſation was exempt from pouertie, nothing could diſcommodate him, he was recreated with odoriferant flowers, and delightfull fruicts, filled with honour and glory, and eſtabliſhed or created prince of all creatures.

This minion or fauorite of heauen was an abridegement of all perfection, a microcoſme where

where God had heaped all the exquisite beauty that could be seene in heauen or in earth. For he had enriched him with grace, endowed him with immortalitie, and aboue all created him in originall iustice, whereby he perfectly possessed all naturall sciences which to gether with the knowledge of supernaturall misteries was infused into him at the time of his creation.

Moreouer God had ranged all creatures vnder his obedience, all liuing beasts did acknowledge him for their lord, all other things tending to his benefit, content, and pleasure: the planets sent forth no euill influences, each heauen, planet, and element containeing themselues within the limits of their natures to the vse of man. But that which excelles

excelles all is that man was made to the image and likeneſſe of God, that he might alwayes tend towards him and conforme himſelfe entirely to his holy will, nothing being ſufficient to content him ſaue only God. So that beholding himſelfe he had occaſiō to contemplate the maker of all things, and conſider the dignitie of his owne ſoule. To be briefe, Adam had ſuch great prerogatiues in the ſtate of innocency, that he was alwayes vnited to God, his ſoule enriched with grace was pleaſing to God, his appetite without contradiction was ſubiect to the lawes of reaſon, his body should haue beene alwayes vigorous and ſtrong. &c.

Who is he that beholding this well carued image, is not rauished

and

and astonished, or can refraine from extolling the honour and praise of the workeman? Who can behold so noble a creature, & not magnify the Creatour who hath made man the ornament of the world, the epitomie of the grand vniuerse, the loue of heauen, the terrour of the diuell, cõpaniõ of angels, sonne of God, and brother of Christ Iesus! what shall I say more? It is impossible to conceiue, much harder to declare the preheminence, dignity, and nobility of man in the state of Innocence, when as he was cloathed with that royall robe of originall iustice whereby man was subiect to God, all the inferiour powers to reason. But alas this did not long continue, as is to be seene in the following chapter.

THE

The 23. Chapter.

Declaring mans fall from the state of Innocency.

HOmo, *cum in honore esset, non intellexit, comparatus est iumentis insipientibus, & similis factus est illis. Psal* 48. Man, when he was in honour, did not vnderstand, he was compared to the foolish beasts, and became like to them. Adam did not know his excellency and dignity, but he became like an irrationall creature without iudgement, and transgressed the commands of God, by eating of forbidden fruit, and so by his disobedience did as it were make a massacre vpon all

mankind : which thus piouſly *S. Auguſtine* deplores vpon S. Paules epiſtles, O *durus, & durior caſus* &c. ô cruell, and more than cruell fall ! alas, what is it that man hath loſt ? what is it that he hath found ? he hath loſt the beatitude, whereunto he was created ; he hath found death from whence he was exempted. O infortunate Adam ! thou haſt chaſed vs out of our country, thy ſinne hath banished vs into this troubleſome deſart of curſed earth, and from immortall as we were, we are become mortals. O miſerable ſeruitude, ineſtimable loſſe, inſupportable paine, and moſt grieuous torment ! ô vnfortunate Adam, what haſt thou done ? wherefore laſt thou ſo ſoone forgotten the commande of thy creatour, tranſgreſſed the precept of thy maſter, and

trodden vnder foot the law of thy God? what disorder? what passion? what intemperance hath seased on thee, that thou couldest not be contented with so great abundance of all good, but must needs eat of forbiddē fruit, whereas thou mightest at thy pleasure eat of all the rest. *S. Chrysostome* in his homily *de Adamo* in the person of God doth the same. *Vbi imago mea primum formosa* &c. where is my image that I haue created so beautiful? where is that most pretious ornament of Paradise? where is the chiefe worke of my hands? where is the liuely heire of my kingdome? where now is my familiar friēd? O vnfortunate sinne that hath depriued mankind of so great good, made him to be cast out of paradise, and to be condemned to teares, labours, griefes,

and death, both in himselfe, and all his posteritie.

No sooner then had man disobeyed God, but concupiscence began to raigne and domineere ouer the spirit, and the inferiour powers to rebell against reason. He who euen now was the most noble, and most perfect of all sensible creatures, is now become of all the most miserable, and because he had rebelled against his God he finds a continuall rebellion within and against himselfe, being as the Apostle *S. Paule* saith, Rom 7. *venundatus sub peccato* sold vnder sinne, and he & his posteritie deliuered vp to the slauery of originall sinne, and tyrannie of concupiscence. The flesh is become a remora to the spirit in its course to heauē, whereof each one may iustly com-

plaine

plaine in himſelfe ſaying, I ſee another law in my members repugning, that is rebelling to the law of my minde, and captiuating me in the law of ſinne, making me ſubiect to the law of ſinne that is my concupiſcence. In ſo much that vnwillingly and with reluctation I am forced to feele its vitious inclinations, and I cannot eſcape its ſnares.

Well hath the wiſe man ſayd Eccl. 40. *Great trauell is created to all men, and an heauie yoake vpon the children of Adam, from the day of their comming forth of their mothers wombe, vntill the day of their burying into the mother of all.* In their whole life they are to ſuffer many infirmities, wants, griefes, lamentations, mournings, cares, anguiſhes, labours, contradictions, perſecutious, wearineſſes,

iniuries, rapines, ſlaughters, temptations, and other innumerable troubles, and afflictions, in ſo much that life ſeemeth no other than a long and continuall death, a prolonged death or decaying life.

I will conclude, omitting many yea innumerable euills that haue proceeded from this ſinne of Adam, and only ſet downe the ten effects of originall ſinne, which Cardinall *Bellarmine* in his booke *de amiſſ. gra.* doth aſſigne, to wit, Ignorance in the vnderſtanding, malice in the will, concupiſcene in the flesh, calamitie, labour and paine in the members, death in the body, anger and wrath of God, captiuitie vnder the diuell, ſtrifes, debates, brawlings, ſeditions, and warres with our neighbours, enmitie and rebellion

bellion of irrationall creatures, and innumerable euils comming from the heauens and elements. O grieuous yoake of mankind.

The 24. Chapter.

Declaring how we may reduce our selues to the state of Innocency.

HAuing thus briefly shewed what the state of innocence was, and what we haue lost by Adams sin, it is now time to explicate the Popes words afore cited, and see how we may be reduced to the state of Innocence.

The light and Doctour of the

Gentils *Rom.* 5. ſaith, *If in the offence of one, death reigned by one, much more they who receiue abundance of grace, and of donation, and of Iuſtice, ſhall reigne by one, Ieſus Chriſt. Therfore as by the offence of one vnto all men to condemnation, ſo alſo by the iuſtice of one, vnto all men to iuſtification of life.* As if he ſhould haue ſayd, If by the fault of Adam all his poſteritie did incurre the guilt & paine of death, know that Chriſt hath exhibited a farre greater benefit; for Chriſt by his grace hath giuen vs greater gifts, than Adam by his ſinne hath taken from vs. For ſaith he *not as the offence, ſo alſo the gift. For if by the offence of one many died, much more the grace of God, and the gift in the grace of one man Ieſus Chriſt hath abounded vpon many.* As by Adam all were brought to perdi-

tion,

tion, ſo by Chriſt all were redeemed; by Adam all were ſubiected to punishment, by Chriſt all deliuered; by Adam all did looſe grace, by Chriſt all may receiue it after a more excellent manner; by Adam all came to dye temporally, by Chriſt all may riſe to life eternall: by Adam all were brought to a corrupted ſtate, by Chriſt all may be eleuated to a more ſublime and ſpirituall ſtate: by Adam all were made like beaſtes, by Chriſt like Angels, yea aboue Angels: Adam depriued vs of the tree of life, Chriſt giues vs the bread of life: Adam depriued vs of originall Iuſtice, Chriſt giues vs plenty of grace equiualent to that originall Iuſtice, yea farre ſurpaſſing, for although both be ſupernaturall gifts immediatly infuſed in the

ſoule, yet they differ in this that originall iuſtice did make a perfect peace betweene the faculties and powers of the ſoule, and grace doth make man pleaſing and acceptable to God in order to eternall life, and by it man is made a ſonne of God, and heire of the kingdome of heauen. This grace of its owne nature is ſufficient to reduce vs to that former ſtate of innocence, and that in all reſpects, but that God in his infinite wiſedome for diuerſe reaſons hath permitted to ſtand with grace many tribulations, and afflictions of this world.

S. Auguſtine will giue vs the firſt reaſon hereof in his booke *de pec. rem. c.* 31. that we should not ſeeke after the Sacraments for temporall reſpects, but for the future glory, thereby to exer-

exercise our faith, hope, patience and such like; so that by the ineffable mercy of God the paine of vice doth passe into armour of vertue, and the punishment of the sinner is become the merit of the iust.

Secondly God permits these temporall troubles to remaine, to put vs in mind of the greiuousnesse of the fault, for other wise we should scarce thinke of the sinne that is so long past, when we are so vnmindfull of our owne sinnes newly committed.

Thirdly this is a worke of the diuine prouidence, to excite vs to the consideration and search of a better life exempt and free from all miserie: for as experience teacheth vs, there is nothing more moues vs to seeke after celestiall things, than to consider and ponder

der the miſeries of this world.

Fourthly by the want of this originall iuſtice we are put in mind of our frailtie, and how eaſily we may fall into ſinne

Fiftly that the members may be like vnto their head *Chriſt Ieſus*, who notwithſtanding that he was replenished with all grace, would take vpon him our infirmities, and for our ſakes become ſubiect to the law of death.

For ſuch and the like reaſons, hath God permitted that man ſhould not enioy that peace which in the ſtate of Innocence he poſſeſſed. But yet he hath fully ſupplied this defect, by enriching our ſoules with many graces and gifts, as virginity, patience, martyrdome, faſting, abſtinences, mortification, pouertie, obedience and ſuch like, which he by word

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and example hath left vs, to the end that we may attaine to a ſtate of Innocence equiualent to the former, and much exceeding it in merit; for by theſe vertues performed in grace we labour to produce in our ſoules that which by originall Iuſtice we might haue poſſeſſed, and conſequently thoſe that profeſſe the practiſe of the aforeſaid vertues, doe as much as lies in their power, endeauour to reduce themſelues to the ſtate of Innocence. Which made the Pope to ſay that the religious of this order, who by their rule and manner of life doe continually practiſe theſe vertues, haue their finall end of their profeſſiõ, to reduce themſelues to the ſtate of innocence. And this, for that by their rule they are to produce effects directly contrary to the effects of originall ſinne ſet downe

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in the end of the precedent chapter; as perfect faith in their vnderstanding, charitie in their will, mortification of their concupiscence, patience in all calamities, labours and paines, triumph ouer death, pacification of Gods wrath, libertie of spirit, peace of minde, charitie to the whole world, and fortitude to beare and vndergoe all the euils of this world. And to these their rule brings them, and consequently reduces them to the state of innocence.

THE

The 25. Chapter.

Whether the religious of this third order be in the state of perfection.

OVr seraphicall Doctour S. *Bonauenture* sets downe fiue sorts of perfection, to be found in Christians. The first is common and necessarie to all Christians, which he cals sufficient perfection, consisting in the performance of the precepts. Of this our Sauiour speaketh *Mat.5. Estote perfecti, sicut pater vester cælestis perfectus est.* Be yee perfect, as your heauenly father is perfect. The second is perfection of religion, which consists in the obseruance

uance of the counsells, wherof it is said, *Mat.* 19. *si vis perfectus esse, vade & vende omnia quæ habes. &c.* If thou wilt be perfect, goe and sell all thou hast. The third is perfection of prelature, which consists in the gouernement of subiects, according to that of *S. Luke c.* 6. *perfectus omnis erit, si sit sicut magister eius.* euery one shall be perfect, if he be as is master; The fourth is perfection of worke, which consists in the ostension of good examples, from whence Noe was said to be perfect. *Gen.* 6. *Noe vir iustus fuit atque perfectus in generationibus suis.* Noe was a iust and perfect man in his generations. The fift and last is perfection of tranquillitie, which consists in the consummation of the things that are best and most hard. According

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to that of *S. Iohn* 1. *ep. c.* 4. *Perfecta charitas foras mittit timorem.* Perfect charitie casteth out feare.

Now it is certaine that the religious of this third order, as being Christians and faithfull subiects of Gods Church, doe or ought to enioy the first perfection. For by their rule and profession they are obliged punctually to obserue the precepts, whereunto also they bind themselues in a more strict manner, as shall be declared in the second part.

The third perfection is proper to Bishops and prelats, and consequently cannot be appropriated to any religious state, which is only a state of getting perfection, and therfore by some iudged to be the schoole wherein prelates might learne that perfection which they communicate to o-

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thers.

But the other three may be appropriated to a religious ſtate, which is no other but a ſtate of men or woemen tending to chriſtian perfection by the vowes of pouertie, chaſtitie, and obedience: or a certaine manner of life, bound by certaine lawes and cuſtomes, wherein perfection is acquired by obſeruance of the Euangelicall counſells, whereby the profeſſours therof become perfect examples, and patternes of good life, whilſt they themſelues attaine to the chiefe perfection of tranquillitie and peace which vnites them to God.

Amõgſt other approued orders in Gods Church this third order, as it is now accomodated for religious perſons tends to ſuch perfection; for as it hath beene declared before, and will appeare

more

more plainely in the expoſition of the rule, this third order is a ſtate of men or woemen tending to Chriſtian perfection by the three eſſentiall vowes of religion, and other obſeruances of Euangelicall counſells, and hath yeelded many illuſtrious perſons famous for ſanctitie and pietie, and indeed wholy tends to the perfection of tranquillitie and peace, as may be ſeene in the chapter following.

This may be confirmed by the Popes who haue approued and confirmed this order to be religious, and in the ſtate of perfection. *Martin the* 5. *Eugenius* 4. in the yeare 1442. *Nicholas* 5. in the yeare 1447. *Paulus* 2. in the yeare 1459. *Sixtus* 4. in the yeare 1471. *Iulius* 2. in the yeare 1508. *Leo* 10. in the yeare 1517. 1521. *Clemens* 7. in the yeare 1526. *Paulus*

lus 3. in the yeare 1547. *Grego-rius* 13. in the yeare 1575. *Sixtus* 5. in the yeare 1586. *Clemens* 8. in the yeare 1595, 1600. and 1603. *Paulus* 5. in the yeare 1610. and 1613. *Greg.* 15. in the yeare 1621. and *Vrbanus* 8. who now raignes, in the yeare 1626. who with others haue all acknowledged those of the third order of both sexes that make the three vowes, liuing in community, to be true and properly religious, forbidding them to goe to any other orders, besides the Carthusians. And as such they haue beene receiued by all Christian princes, who haue giuen them the same priuiledges which other religious haue. And finally *Sixtus Quartus* doth excommunicate all those that should contradict or deny them to be religious, and consequently tend to perfection.

The 26. Chapter.

Whether the third order be actiue or contemplatiue.

THe angelicall Doctour *S. Thomas* deuides the life of a christian into actiue and contemplatiue, becauſe ſome men doe principally attend to contemplation, others to exteriour actions, alledging the authoritie of *S. Gregory. hom* 14. *ſuper Ezech*: who ſaith, *Duæ ſunt vitæ in quibus nos omnipotens Deus per ſacrum eloquium erudit, actiua videlicet & contemplatiua.* There be two liues ſaith he, wherein allmightly God doth inſtruct vs by

by his word, to wit actiue and contemplatiue.

This last in it selfe and of its owne nature farre exceeds the other, which the foresaid *S. Thomas* proues by many reasons, as that because the contemplatiue life belongs to man according to his best part, to wit according to his vnderstanding and will, for it principally consists in the operations of the soule, but the actiue life is occupied about exteriour things. Secondly, there is more delight in the contemplatiue than in the actiue, whence *S. Aug: ser 26 de verbis Domini. Martha turbabatur, Maria Epulabatur*, Martha was troubled, Marie feasted. Thirdly the contemplatiue is to be loued for it selfe, but the actiue is ordained to some other end. Fourthly the con-

contemplatiue life is according to diuine things, but the actiue according to humaine. Whence our Sauiour said to *Marie* Luc. 10. *Optimam partẽ elegit Maria, quæ non auferetur ab ea.* Marie hath choſen the beſt part which shall not be taken away from her. Which *S. Auguſt* ſer 27. in the place aboue cited, thus expoundeth; Thou *Martha* haſt not choſen an euill part, but she a better, becauſe it shall not be taken away frõ her, but from thee ſometime shal be taken away the burden of neceſſitie, the ſweetneſſe of truth or contemplation being eternall. And *S. Baſill* affirmeth, that by theſe two woemen are ſet before our eies two ſorts of life, the one of which is of inferiour note or eſteeme, becauſe occupied in the more groſſe operations of this life

life, and yet maruellously profitable: wherfore if thou wilt ſerue with Martha, doe in the name of God, for Chriſt hath ſaid, what you shall doe to one of my little ones, that you doe to mee, whether you lodge ſtrangers, feed the poore, or be moued to compaſſion on the afflicted, our lord will repute all theſe offices as if they were done to his owne perſon. But in another place the ſame Father doth highly extoll the contemplatiue life, ſaying that it is the ſchoole of celeſtiall doctrine, the diſcipline of diuine ſciences, where God is all that is learned, where God is the way by which we muſt goe, by him alone we muſt come to the knowledge of the ſoueraigne truth. So that the contemplatiue life is a continuall

adheſion

adhesion to God in spirit, whereby man becomes lord of the whole world hauing his conuersation in heauen, & there fixeing and placing his mind doth despise all earthly things, whiles he esteemes nothing good or great but God and diuine things, and here is his continuall pradise vnlesse the law of charitie otherwise require.

Hence there be found amongst religious orders three states, some that giue themselues to the actiue life, others that apply their minds wholy to the contemplatiue, and lastly others that are partly contemplatiue and partly actiue, more or lesse according to their seuerall constitutions. Of the first sort are all those orders of knights, who make profession of seuerall exteriour acts, as to

defend the poore, or to fight a-gainſt the Turkes: as alſo all thoſe that giue themſelues to keepe hoſpitalls, redeeme captiues, and ſuch like Of the ſecond ſort, be all thoſe ancient hermits, Anachorits, and monkes, and generally all religious woemen who vow encloſure. For they lead a life truely angelicall, night and day ſeruing God in the quire, and applying their minds to their God in all their actions. Of the third and laſt are thoſe religious orders which are commonly called mendicants, who apply themſelues aſwell to the contemplatiue life, as to the actiue which proceeds from the contemplatiue, in preaching, teaching, and conuerting of Nations.

In this our third order of our holy Father *S. Francis* be found

of

of all ſorts. For as it hath beene before declared, therebe ſome of them that leade a pious kind of life in the world addicting themſelues to godly excerciſes of deuotion, principally of penance whereof they make profeſſion, and ſome others doe liue in communities, and giue themſelues to ſerue the ſicke, keepe hoſpitalls, lodge the poore, and ſuch like, all which no doubt doe follow the actiue way, others there be that giue themſelues purely to the contemplatiue way, and ſuch are thoſe religious woemen of this order as make vow of Encloſure, for their whole life hath no other end but to ſerue and loue God, as shall more amply be declared in the expoſition of their rule. Laſtly there are ſome that enioy a mixt life (which cannot be

proper for woemen) and such be those Friars of the third order in Spaine and France, who preach and teach in the same manner as other mendicants doe, and not without fruit, no other wise differing from the Friar minors who are of the first order, than the religious woemen enclosed doe differ frō the poore Clares, to wit that their rule and manner of life is not so austere and hard, the reason wherof I haue declared before, to wit that in this holy and seraphicall order might be foode for all pallats.

THE

The 27. Chapter.

Whether it be lawfull for any one to diuert another from comming to religion.

HAueing hitherto endeauoured to explicate the prologue or preface that goes before this rule, I cannot let passe this question, as much conducing to the clearing of those words. *For which the pure affections of chast minds are sometimes auerted from entring into the said order &c.* Which was one of the chiefe reasons why the Pope did accomodate this rule to religious persons, many seeking

king to deterre them from it by alledging that the rule was not fit for a religious life; as also notwithstanding the Popes labour and industrie, some not vnderstanding or not conceiuing the difference of the rule and professions euen at this time haue done; which gaue also an occasion to these my poore labours, aswell to vindicate the manifest wrong they doe to this holy and religious order, as also to take away all occasions whereby any one may be auerted from so pious and laudable an institution, wherein I hope all shall find full satisfaction in the explication of the rule. It rests only in this place to inquire, whether any one may lawfully diuert another from any religious order. Which I will doe as briefely as I can, referring the more

more curious to those that haue more amply treated of this subiect.

This diuersion may be done either directly, as when one of purpose or of set malice doth hinder any one from entring into religion; or indirectly, as when they doe it vpon some pretence or excuse, which to them may seeme reasonable or to some greater good.

It is the common opinion of all diuines, that whosoeuer shall hinder any one from comming to religiõ, by force, fraude, deceit, or feare, cannot be excused from mortall sinne, but is bound to declare the said fraude, or deceit, and to take away that force and feare. Which made *S. Hierom* in his Epistle to Heliod. to say, *Retrahere aliquem a religione, nihil est*

aliud, quam Christum in pectore alicuius occidere, Christo se opponere, spargere & dissipare quæ Christus collegit; To withdraw or draw backe any one from religion is nothing elfe but to kill Christ in anothers breast, to oppose themselues against Christ, to scatter and dissipate what Christ hath gathered together. And in his tenth epistle *ad Furiam*, he calles such *venenata animalia* poysoned beasts. Whence the holy councell of *Trent. sess.* 25. *c.* 18. *de Regul.* declares thē to be excomunicated, that force any virgin or woman to take the habit of religion, as also all those that giue counsell, aide, or fauour thereto, and in like manner excommunicates those that without iust cause shall hinder the holy will of virgins, and other women from receiuing

ceiuing the veile or making vowes of religion. The third Toletane councell hath the ſame in expreſſe termes, whence it behooues parents to be carefull, and to take heed leaſt they force or any way hinder their children in matter of religion. *S. Auguſtine Ep.* 38. will haue this affection to be killed in the mother *ne ipſa in æternum pereat*, leaſt she perish for euer. And S. *Bernard. Ep.* 104. ſaith, *Mater tua vult contraria tuæ & per hoc & ſuæ ipſius ſaluti*, ſpeaking to one whoſe mother detained her from religion, thy mothers deſire, ſaith he, is cõtrary to thy ſaluation, and by this alſo to her owne ſaluation. And ep. 111. he calles ſuch parents, that will hinder their children from religion *Duros, ſæuos, crudeles, non parentes, ſed peremptores*, hard, harsh, cruell, not parents but killers, be-

cauſe they hinder their children leaſt they should ſerue God, fly from the fire that is at their backes, shunne the theeues that would wound them, get into a ſafe hauen out of the tempeſts of this world, and be made capable of the celeſtiall good things which are offered vnto them.

Others there bee who indirectly propoũding ſuch things as may giue occaſion of their hinderãces, with Iudas cry out, *vt quid perditio hæc*! Theſe might ſtay in the world and helpe others, the wiſe inſtruct the ſimple, the rich aſſiſt the poore, the married might generate children to ſerue the commonweale. *Vt quid perditio hæc?* why should ſuch goe to religion whoſe life is ſo neceſſary to many? But in ſo ſayeing they doe not conſider what vpon thoſe words

words followes. *Quid moleſti eſtis huic mulieri?* anſwered our lord, why doe you moleſt this woman, for she hath wrought vpon me a good worke? Why doe you reprehend her? why doe you hinder her, hath she not done a good pious, laudable, and Chriſtian act, ſo much commended by our Sauiour? If ſo, as none can deny, with what conſcience can any one withdraw her or any ſuch as sheeis, from it. Specially when as there can be no better worke, no greater charitie than for a man or woman to giue and conſecrate himſelfe wholy to God. How then can any vnder whatſoeuer cloake or pretence with draw deuout ſoules from the true way of ſanctitie and perfection ſuch as religion is. If they perſuade them to an oblation of

their goods or corporall meanes, that is but a very meane ſacrifice, being compared with the entire conſecration of themſelues and all they haue to God which is a perfect holocauſt. Againe whatſoeuer ſuch pretend, the thing they deſire in ſubſtance is nothing elſe, but to haue them remaine in the world; for they are not certaine of their charitie, of their health, proſperitie, wealth, riches, wiſdome, in a moment all may be loſt: but the way of religion is certaine, ſecure, and permanent, no way to be loſt. The world, ſaith *S. Iohn*, 1. *epiſt. c.* 2. paſſeth, and the concupiſcence thereof, but he that doth the will of God abideth for euer. Neither needs their friends feare or be anxious for their loſſe, for ſuch is the goodneſſe of God, that he will amply ſupply that aſſiſtence

ſtence which could bee expected from them, eſpecially being moued therto by the prayers of thoſe deuout perſons who for his loue haue forſaken their deareſt friēds and kinsfolke. And who is or can be ignorant of the manifold miſeries, and dangers of this world, which, as the foreſaid *S. Iohn.* ſaith in the ſame place, hath nothing in it but *concupiſcentiam carnis, concupiſcentiam oculorum, & ſuperbiam vitæ*, concupiſcence of the flesh, and concupiſcence of the eies, and pride of life, amongſt all which the danger is eminent & ſecuritie very doubtfull, as continuall experience doth more than ſufficiently manifeſt; whereas religion tends to the contrarie and brings ſecurely to the hauen of ſaluation.

Others there be, who of their owne

owne accord, or by the perſua-ſion of others notwithſtanding the good deſires they haue to follow Chriſt in a religious life doe delay and prolong the time with a *Domine permitte me primum ire, & ſepelire patrem meum. mat.* 8. lord permit me firſt to goe and bury my father: taking for a pre-tence of their ſtay the loue reuerence and duty which they owe to their parents. But theſe will not take heede to what im-mediatly comes after, *Ieſus autem ait illi, ſequere me, & dimitte mor-tuos ſepelire mortuos*, the ſpirit of truth, who can teach all perfe-ction, ſaith follow me, and let the dead bury the dead. Whereby we are giuen to vnderſtand that ſpirituall workes of mercy are to be preferred before corporall, and that the following of Chriſt,

is farre more excellent than the duty or respect we owe to our parents; for God hath more right to vs than our parents haue. True it is, we are commanded to honour our Father and mother: but first and with much more reason, we must honour God, we must loue our Parents, but aboue all God. Well said that holy woman 2. *Mac.* 7. *I know not how you appeared in my wombe, for neither did I giue you spirit, nor soule, nor life, and the members of euery one I my selfe framed not; but the creatour.* O that all parents would haue this consideration? for if the creatour did giue spirit, life, and soule to their children, can they thinke much to giue them or to permit them to giue themselues to God. And herein I haue marked a strange deceit of the enemie,

mie, for I haue knowne and heard of many, that vpon ſuch like pretenſes haue ſtaid away from entring into religion, they haue beene very well contented to trauell into farre countries, or to ſerue in the court, or ſome ſuch like place, where perhaps they ſhall neuer ſee their parents, much leſſe haue occaſion to helpe them, and moſt commonly are to them a great burden, vexation, and trouble, yea ſometimes to their vtter vndoing, yet all is thought well on both ſides if they enter not into religion. Can there be any greater abſurditie, than that vpon theſe aery and vngrounded pretenſes of helping or comforting their parents and friends, they ſhould withſtand the vocation that God hath giuen them, and yet in ſhort time

withdraw themſelues from their parents, ſometimes alſo with their conſent, to range themſelues vnder ſome warlike ſtandards, where they may enioy one another afarre of, vntill a little bullet diſſolue all, and conclude perhaps with a diſmall end. And indeed where ſoeuer they goe, death may ſuddainely meet with them, and then the dead parent dead to God may bury his dead ſonne or daughter, which might haue happely dyed to the world, and alwayes haue liued to Chriſt Ieſus.

Some others there be who are doubtfull of their abilitie and ſtrength, ſaying with Saul, *Non vales reſiſtere Philiſtæo iſti, nec pugnare aduerſus eum, quia puer es.* Reg. 17. thou art not able to reſiſt this Philiſtian, nor to fight againſt

againſt him, becauſe thon art a child. You cannot perſeuer in ſuch auſteritie, your delicate and tender complexion and conſtitution cannot vndergoe ſuch mortifications, faſtings, diſciplines, and ſuch like; but theſe doe not ponder, that if they with Dauid goe on in the name of our lord, they neede not feare the victorie, and that he who giueth the vocation, will alſo grant perſeuerance, both vocation and perſeuerance being the gift of God. And certaine it is that where there is a good vocation, there ſeldome or neuer can be wanting a happy perſeuerance, eſpecialy where there be ſo many meanes to conſerue it. For in religion they are animated by the good examples of others, defended by many holy prayers which are dayly

dayly offered for them, and ſtrengthened by abundance of grace which God doth ordinarly communicate to thoſe that liue in a religious communitie. I doe not ſay but that ſome may fall, but howſoeuer it is rare, and that very great malice, which God doth moſt commonly punish with ſeuerity, and ſome publicke punishment for the abbetterment of others. As for what they pretend of weakneſſe, or of tender complexion, beſides that as God giues the vocation, ſo alſo he giues ſtrength to performe it; let them take any religious communitie, and they shall find ſome that haue beene as weake and tender if not more than they: yea continuall experiẽce teacheth vs, that thoſe who haue beene moſt tenderly bred vp, are many times

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ſuch as deſire and practiſe moſt auſteritie. And indeed who more ready to faſt, more prompt on all occaſions, than thoſe who are of more noble birth, and conſequently of a more delicate education. It is admirable to ſee how humbly, with what ſubmiſſiue obedience, and with how great auſteritie and mortification kings and queenes, princes and nobles of all ſorts haue comported themſelues in religion to the confuſion of thoſe who haue beene of a lower ranke by birth, though equall in religion, all ſetting their hands to the ſame plough. To this we may adde, that none are in better health, or of longer life than religious perſons, who no way confide on their proper force and ſtrength, but on the goodneſſe and grace of God,

knoweing

knoweing full well that it is not humane force which muſt preuaile, but Gods particular helpe and aſſiſtance. And we all ſee the ſtrong and well able bodyes to faile and die as ſoone as the weake.

Without all doubt there may be many iuſt reaſons to deſiſt from a courſe of religion begun, for many times God doth permit his ſeruants to be affl cted with ſuch infirmitie, ſickneſſe, or weakneſſe, for their greater benefit, that they are not able to goe forward. And then ſo farre is it from being a diſparagement to them either to leaue or not enter into religion (ſuppoſeing it be not out of lightneſſe of mind or inconſtancy) that as they haue merited much before God in their pious deſires, ſo they haue mani-

manifeſted their loue to God being ready to doe more if they could. In which caſe their deſire of being religious, will not be without the merit and reward of religion, as the deſire of martyrdome wants not in ſome part the crowne thereof. Nothing more frequent and ordinary than to ſee very many good ſoules ſtrongly poſſeſſed with a vehement deſire of martyrdome, to haue beene by the diuine prouidence hindred of the ſame; and euery day many doe attempt with a full reſolute minde that which God in his wiſedome otherwiſe diſpoſes. No man will condemne a ſouldier that valourouſly enters into the field although by accident or want of prouiſion he be forced to retire. Neither can any one blame ſuch

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vertuous ſoules who leaue religion not through inconſtancy, or want of deuotion, or deſire to perſeuer, but becauſe it is Gods will to diſpoſe otherwiſe of them.

Finally to conclude this chapter, omitting many other like meanes that ſome doe vſe to deterre others from religion, as generally included in thoſe before mentioned. Some there be, who out of a great zeale to the good of ſoules, not well conſidering and pondering the ſtate and vocation of each one, doe ſeeke to draw others to ſome more perfect ſtate or religious courſe; which thing in it ſelfe is good and pious, as *S. Thomas* well prooues, yet great charitie, prudence, and diſcretion are to be had therein; charitie, that it be not for humaine

maine

maine reſpects or ends, but purely for God; otherwiſe they ſhall find by experience, it will come to nought, and thereby diſedifie thoſe who ſee and heare it, giuing occaſion of iarres and quarrells with others which can neuer be auoided when they ſeeke any thing but Gods glory and honour; Prudence and diſcretion, leaſt they ſhould ſeeme to contradict the ſpirit that calles them to ſome other ſtate more proper and conuenient for them. *Si ſic eum volo manere, quid ad te?* If God will haue them to remaine ſo, what is that to any other, in ſtead of doing them good, they may eaſily doe them harme; and which is more, the places whereto they come are ſeldome the better for hauing them, they themſelues alſo many

times

times not being contented therewith, which causes them to lead a languishing life. God disposes his gifts as he pleases, what is man that he should resist his worke: he knowes best to dispose of each spirit, and conformably to giue his holy vocation. And because we haue fallen on this subiect, it will not be amisse to speake a word or two concerning these vocations, which I will briefly doe referring the more curious reader to such authors who haue more amply treated of this subiect.

The 28. Chapter.

Briefly discoursing of Vocations, and how one may assure himselfe of them.

THree things occurre to be examined, to wit, whether it be expedient to enter into religion, secondly whether it be expedient for this or that particular person to enter into religion, thirdly how one may know what religion is most conuenient for him.

As for the first, the angelicall Doctour 2.2. q. 189. ar. 10. declareth it to be certaine and as a matter

matter of faith, that the entry into religion is very good and pious, & those who doubt hereof doe in as much as lies in their power, derogate from Christs authoritie who gaue this counsell, whose words and actions tended to nothing more, than to persuade vs pouerty, chastitie, abnegation of the will, & such like things, which religion requires. Whence it acknowledgeth no other founder, no other beginner but Christ, whom his Apostles imitating haue communicated the selfe same manner of life to succeding ages. So that it were great presumption or want of faith to make such a doubt, whereas the holy scripture and whole torrent of the Fathers & Doctours of the Church doe so highly esteeme of such a state;

calling it the better part of this mortall life, the greateſt and eaſyeſt way to be ſaued, an aſſembly of Angels, and royall ſeat of Gods children.

In this garden planted by God we are freed from the weeds of many euils, and replenished with all good flowers of vertues, to enioy a continuall peace of ſpirit, and a moſt perfect vnion of the will to God. Here deuout ſoules receiue the diuine influences of celeſtiall delights, a perpetuall banquet of ſpirituall conſolations. Who liſt to haue more of this ſubiect, let him read *Hieronymus Platus* of the happyneſſe of a religious ſtate, and there he ſhall vnderſtand that a Religious life, is, without all exception, in it ſelfe, moſt happy and perfect. And conſequently it were to im-

impugne truth it ſelfe to deny this. I make no doubt if the readers well conſider his words and reaſons, they will cry out with the queene of Saba, *Bleſſed are thy men, and bleſſed are thy ſeruants which ſtand before thee alwayes, and heare thy wiſdome, bleſſed are all thoſe that enioy ſo great good.*

As for the ſecond point, it is moſt certaine that as there be diuerſe manſions in heauen, ſo there are diuerſe wayes to goe to them, and diuerſe Spirits to goe by thoſe diuerſe wayes. And all are not capable of all wayes, whence our ſauiour ſaith Mat. 19. *Qui poteſt capere capiat*, he that can take let him take, inſinuating vnto vs that it is a hard thing to doe it, and not for euery one to doe. Wherfore he doth not command it but inuite vs vnto it by

word and example, for he knew that all could not doe this, some being hindred by ſickneſſe, others by other occaſions, as thoſe that haue parents in extreame neceſſitie, huſband, wife, and ſuch like, generally thoſe that by the law of God are obliged to the contrary. But ſetting aſide theſe impediments it is moſt certaine that a religious ſtate is good for all and euery one, our Sauiour ſpeaking generally to all, *Si vis perfectus eſſe, vade, & vende &c.* if thou wilt be perfect, goe ſell the things that thou haſt, and giue to the poore, and thou ſhalt haue treaſure in heauen, and come follow me. Which made *S. Hierome* to ſay; Wilt thou be perfect, and ſtand in the higheſt top of dignitie? doe as the Apoſtles haue done, ſell thoſe things thou haſt,

and

and giue to the poore, and follow our Sauiour, and with naked vertue follow the naked Crosse. What shall I multiply many words in a thing so cleare, when it is manifest that what soeuer Christ hath preached, is in it selfe pious, and good, euen to thee, if thou hast no impediment, and that God shall call thee.

In the third point great circumspection and care is to be had, aswell in corresponding to Gods holy vocation, as in making choise of what state is most conuenient; yet generally speaking, that is most conuenient and agreeable to any ones condition, which God inspires; for in this, there can be no errour or deceit, the difficultie only remaines to know when such a vocation is from God, which requires a

longer treatise than our present subiect will permit; wherfore I briefly touch the principall.

The Angel of the schooles *S. Thomas* teacheth vs, that vocations are two fold, one exteriour, which is by preaching, good persuasion, good example, tribulation, or affliction, yet not so, but that it is accompanyed with the interiour motions of the holy ghost; for, as *S. Paule* saith, Cor. 3. *Neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth, but he that giueth encrease, God.* Who alone breatheth those inspirations of the supernaturall life in their soules. The other is purely interiour by God himselfe, who doth illuminate and inflame their minds, but seuerally, for to some he inspires this holy vocation by

a powerfull operation of the will, which violently poſſeſſes the ſoule making them to approch, as. *S. Paule* Saith, Heb. 10. *with a pure heart in fullneſſe of faith*, no way doubting of Gods benefit herein, ſuch was the vocation of. *S. Paule*, and generally of all the Apoſtles. To others God giues the ſame grace, but after a more obſcure manner, the ſound is heard but they know not well from whence it comes; ſuch was that of *Samuell*, who did heare Gods call, but did not vnderſtand it. So there be many whom God calles interiourly, but they feeling it cannot tell what to doe in it. Laſtly there be ſome that haue vocations from God, but God doth vſe ſome viſible meanes to

bring them to it, such was the calling of *Heliseus* the prophet and that of the Eunuch. In all which there is required a docile heart and obedient mind to answer to such a calling, not following our owne conceits, but to say with *S. Paule, Domine quid me vis facere?* Act. 9. Lord what wilt thou haue me to doe; or with *Samuel. Loquere Domine, quia audit seruus tuus*, Reg. 3. Speake lord, for thy seruant heareth; or with the Psalmist, *Paratum cor meum Deus, paratum cor meum*, my hart is prepared o God, my heart is prepared. O lord instruct me the way of thy iustifications, and I shall be excercised in thy maruellous workes. Conduct me ô God in the path of thy commands. And these may be confident that God will direct them:

but

but with all it is very neceſſarie that they haue recourſe to ſome vertuous and ſpirituall man, that may direct them, for although God be the author of all good, yet he will haue vs to walke the way of humilitie, and to ſubmit our ſelues to others. So *Saul* was ſent to *Ananias*, *Samuel* was inſtructed by *Helie*, the Eunuch by *S. Philip*, *Eliſeus* by *Elias*, *S. Auguſtine* by *S. Ambroſe*; with many ſuch like. So that in this affaire of ſo great importance it is good to follow counſell.

If they thinke good, before they aske this counſell, and that of ſome learned, religious and vertuous perſon, they may firſt retire themſelues a little from company, and from their ordinary employments, thereby the better to conſider what they are

to

to doe, and what motion or inſpiration that is which they feele in themſelues.

Secondly it shalbe very much expedient to goe to Confeſſion and Communion, thereby to obtaine ſtrength and force to accomplish Gods holy will and grace, to diſcerne and iudge what is beſt to be done.

Thirdly it is good with feruour to offer vp a holocauſt of prayer, with humilitie opening their hearts, to obey and performe the will of God in all things, not ſeeking their owne pleaſure or content, but what shall pleaſe the diuine maieſtie, and with this indifferency ſo to carry themſelues that they be truly reſigned.

Hauing done this they may take counſell, as aboue ſaid, commending

mending this affaire to their good Angels, who are giuen them principally for their direction, and then let them make no doubt of their vocation, for God will neuer be wanting to such pious desires, but according to his promise will hearken to such as come vnto him in true humilitie.

Neither is it conuenient that they should expect any reuelation or signe from heauen, whereby they might be made certaine of their vocation; for it would be great temeritie, presumption, and folly to expect such extraordinary effects, when God himselfe hath manifested his will in so ample manner, that none can doubt of it, if their owne intentions be conformable: he inuites, exhorts, and drawes all

vnto

vnto ſuch a vocation by word and example, he hath taught it, if there be any fault, it is on our ſide. Wherfore it behooueth them to looke firſt to themſelues, and conſider with what intention they leaue the world, whether they doe it purely for God, and that they haue a reſolution to obſerue whatſoeuer religion preſcribes, and becauſe in theſe and ſuch like our owne inclinations many times deceiue vs, it ſhall be neceſſary to ſtand to the iudgement and counſell of ſome ſpirituall perſon who hath experience in ſuch things.

When they haue done all this, let thē conſtantly adhere to that inclination which they find in their ſoules, whether it be vnto this order or that order, this ſtate or that ſtate, deemeing that

which

which God hath inſpired them with all to be moſt conuenient and agreeable to their diſpoſition. And when once they haue made choyſe of any ſtate, without all wauering or doubt let them perſeuer therein, without any further deliberation, but aſſure themſelues that ſuch is the ſtate wherein God would be ſerued by them, and let them be confident that his infinite goodneſſe will giue them whatſoeuer shall be needfull for the performance of ſuch a vocation. Wherein notwithſtanding they may chance to find ſome difficulties and temptations to withdraw them from ſo good reſolutions, yet they ought manfully to perſiſt and patiently ſupport all for Gods loue, which will ſweeten all and

make

make this seeming yoake to be most easy and pleasing.

Conclusion.

HItherto I haue laboured to explicate the preface of Pope *Leo* which he set before this rule with intention to satisfie what difficulties might occurre therein, and to lay a foundation to what I am to say in the next part, wherein I will briefly handle each point of the rule, following the chapters and points thereof, which in this preface I could not so well doe. Yet in the beginning of the second part, I will set downe the preface of the Pope, directing the reader to those places in this first part which doe explicate and declare each point therof; if not so well as the curious.

rious reader may expect, yet ſufficiently to giue him a touch of all things that concerne it, and as much as I thought good for this preſent ſubiect, eſpecially ſith I haue alwayes ſtudied breuitie. If this be well accepted, I ſhall the more willingly goe forward with the other.

The End of the firſt part.

MODVS VESTIENDI SORORES Religioſas Tertiæ Regulæ Ordinis D. Franciſci.

PRælatus Indutus Amictu, Alba, & Stola, cũ Diacono & Subdiacono vadit ad oſtium Templi aut Conuentus, vbi ſponſam aduenientem & in limine genua flectentem aſpergit aqua luſtrali: traditâque ei Stolæ extremitate in manu ſiniſtra, ſic eam deducit ad locum ante altare præparatum & ſtatim inchoatur Miſſa, cantato Euangelio, Sacerdos depoſita Caſula petit à ſponſa quid velit? Et facta petitione, abſolutaque concio-

ne

ne eandem interrogat super conditionibus sequentibus.

1. An sit fidelis & Catholica?
2. An de nullo errore suspecta?
3. An matrimonio non ligata?
4. An corpore & mente sana?
5. An legitimè nata?
6. An animo prompta?
7. An debitis expedita?
8. An nulla vulgari infamiâ maculata?
9. An excommunicationis vinculo non ligata?

Istæ interrogationes fiant pridie, vel ipso vestitionis die, secreto (propter sæculares ad vestitionem aduenientes) coram Matre, & Discretis Conuentus, & non in templo: vel quo die Superiori placuerit.

His peractis & conditionibus istis saluis, incipit Prælatus Litanias & prosequitur, Ministris respondentibus hoc modo.

Kyrie

KYrie eleiſon. Chriſte eleiſon. Kyrie eleiſon. Chriſte audi nos. Chriſte exaudi nos.

Pater de cælis Deus, Miſerere no.

Fili Redemptor mundi Deus, Miſerere nobis.

Spiritus Sancte Deus, Miſerere.

Sancta Trinitas vnus Deus, Miſ.

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis

Omnes Sancti beatorum Spirituum ordines, Orate pro nobis.

Omnes Sancti Patriarchæ & Prophetæ, orate pro nobis.

Omnes Sancti Apoſtoli & Euangeliſtæ, orate.

Omnes Sancti Martyres, orate.

Omnes Sancti Confeſſores, orate.

Omnes Sanctæ Virgines & viduæ, orate.

Omnes Sancti & ſanctæ Dei, Intercedite pro nobis.

Propitius eſto, Parce nobis Dñe.

Ab omni immunditia mentis & corporis, Libera nos Domine.

Ab omni peccato, libera.
A damnatione perpetua, libera.
Per Myſterium ſanctæ Incarnationis, Paſſionis, Reſurrectionis, & Aſcenſionis tuæ, libera.
Peccatores, te rogamus audi nos.
Vt pacem & cordis tranquillitatem nobis dones, te rog.
Vt hanc famulam tuam *vel* [has famulas tuas] in vera caſtitate & paupertate conſeruare digneris, te rogamus audi nos.
Vt ei *vel* [eis] virtutem veræ humilitatis & obedientiæ concedere digneris, te rogamus.
Vt eam *vel* [eas] in tuo ſancto ſeruitio vſque in finem perſeuerare facias, te rogamus.
Vt ei *vel* [eis] augmentum Fidei, Spei & Charitatis donare digneris, te rogamus.
Vt omnibus fidelibus defunctis requiem æternam donare digneris, te rogamus.

Fili

Fili Dei, te rogamus.

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, Miserere nobis.

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleyson. Pater noster. ℣ Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

℟. Sed libera nos à malo.

℣. Saluam fac Ancillam tuam *vel* [saluas fac Ancillas tuas.]

℟. Deus meus sperantem *vel* (sperantes) in te.

℣. Mitte ei *vel* [eis] Domine auxilium de Sancto.

℟. Et de Syon tuere eam *vel* [eas.]

℣. Nihil proficiat inimicus in ea *vel* [eis.]

℟. Et filius iniquitatis non apponat nocere ei *vel* [eis.]

℣. Esto ei *vel* [eis] domine turris fortitudinis.

℟. A facie inimici.

℣. Domine exaudi orationē meam.

℟. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

℣. Dominus vobiscum &c.

Ore-

Oremus.

DOmine Ieſu Chriſte qui es via ſine qua nemo venit ad Patrem, quæſumus benigniſſimam clementiam tuam, vt hanc famulam tuam, *vel* [has famulas tuas] per iter diſciplinæ Regularis deducas, qui etiam peccatores vocare dignatus es, dicens: venite ad me omnes qui laboratis & onerati eſtis, & ego reficiam vos; præſta vt hæc vox inuitationis tuæ ita in ea *vel* [eis] conualeſcat, quatenus peccatorum onera deponens, *vel* [deponentes] & quam dulcis es guſtans *vel* [guſtantes] tua refectione ſuſtentari mereatur *vel* [mereantur.] Qui etiam de ouibus tuis atteſtari dignatus es, dicens: Oues meæ vocem meam audiunt, & ego cognoſco eas & cognoſcunt me meæ. Agnoſce eam *vel* [eas] inter oues tuas, vt ipſa *vel* [ipſæ] te ita agnoſcat, *vel* [agnoſcant.]

scant] vt alienum non sequatur, *vel* [sequantur] sed te, neque audiat *vel* [audiant] vocem alienorum, sed tuam, qua dicis, qui mihi ministrat me sequatur. Qui vivis & regnas cum Deo Patre. &c.

Benedictio habitus.

℣. Adiutorium nostrum in nomine Domini.
℟. Qui fecit cælum & terram.
℣. Sit nomen Domini benedictum.
℟. Ex hoc nunc & vsque in sæculum.
℣. Dominus vobiscum.
℟. Et cum spiritu tuo.

Oremus.

DEus æternorum bonorum fidelissime repromissor & certissime persolutor, qui tegumen salutis & indumentum iucunditatis fidelibus tuis promisi-

ſti: immenſam clementiam tuam ſuppliciter exoramus, vt hoc indumentum cordis fidelitatem & mundi contemptum ſignificans, ſub quo famula tua eſt informanda *vel* [famulæ tuæ ſunt informandæ] in Crucis modum propoſitum, propitius benedicas, & beatæ caſtitatis habitum quem inſpirante te ſuſcipit, *vel* [ſuſcipiunt] te protegente illibate cuſtodiat *vel* [cuſtodiant.] Et quam *vel* [quas] veſtimento venerandæ Paſſionis tuæ temporaliter induis, beatâ facias immortalitate veſtiri. Qui viuis & regnas, &c.

Oremus.

DOmine Deus bonarum virtutum dator, & omnium benedictionum infuſor, te ſuppliciter deprecamur, vt hanc veſtem, quam famula tua *vel* [has veſtes, quas famulæ tuæ] pro indicio

dicio cognoscendæ Religionis induet *vel* [induent] benedicere & sanctificare tuâ pietate digneris: quatenus inter religiosas feminas cognoscatur dicata *vel* [cognoscantur dicatæ] amictu. Per Christum, &c.

Benedictio Cinguli.

Oremus.

DEus, qui vt seruum solueres, filium tuum funibus ligari voluisti, benedic quæsumus cingulum istud *vel* [cingula ista] & præsta vt hæc famula tua *vel* [hæ famulæ tuæ] quæ eo *vel* [eis] velut ligamine pœnitentiali cingetur, *vel* [cingentur] vinculorum eiusdem Filij tui Domini nostri Iesu Christi memor existat, *vel* [memores existant] & in ordine quem assumit *vel* [assumunt] salubriter perseuerans *vel*

[perseuerantes] tuis cum effectu semper obsequijs se obligatam esse cognoscat *vel* [obligatas esse cognoscant.] Per eundem Dominũ.

Hic aspergit Sponsã & vestes aqua benedicta, quæ interim exuitur vestibus sæcularibus & dicit Sacerdos.

Exuat te Dominus veterem hominem cum actibus suis. ℟. Amen

Et dum eam Induit habitu Religionis dicit. Induat te Dominus nouum hominem qui secundum Deum creatus est in Iustitia & sanctitate veritatis: ℟. Amen.

Deinde præscinduntur Capilli: quibus amputatis dicitur.

Dominus vobiscum. ℟. Et cum spiritu tuo.

Oremus.

ADesto Domine supplicationibus nostris & hanc famulam *vel* [has famulas] benedicere digneris, cui *vel* (quibus) in nomine tuo habitũ Religionis im-

impoſuimus, vt te largiente & deuota *vel* (deuotæ) in ordine perſiſtere, & vitam percipere mereatur *vel* (mereantur) æternam. Per Chriſtum Dominum noſtrum. ℟. Amen.

Oremus.

DEus pacis, Deus Clemens, cui bona cuncta placent, ſine quo nihil ſanctum inchoatur, nihil bonum perficitur, adſint noſtræ humilitatis precibus aures tuæ pietatis, & hanc famulam tuam cui *vel* (has famulas tuas quibus) in tuo ſancto nomine ſacræ Religionis habitum impoſuimus à mundi impedimento, & à ſecularibus deſiderijs defende, ac concede propitius, vt in hoc ſancto propoſito deuota perſiſtat *vel* (deuotæ perſiſtant) remiſſioneque peccatorum percepta ad Electorum tuorum conſortium peruenire mereatur. *vel*

(mereantur.) Per Dominum nostrum, &c.

Redit Sponsa ad locum. Hic solemniter cantatur.

Veni Creator Spiritus *usque ad finem.*

℣. Emitte Spiritum tuum & creabuntur.

℟. Et renouabis faciem terræ.

℣. Dignare me laudare te virgo sacrata.

℟. Da mihi virtutem, &c.

℣. Ora pro nobis Beate Pater Franciſce.

℟. Vt digni efficiamur, &c.

Oremus.

DEus qui corda fideliũ S. Spiritus illustratione docuisti, da nobis in eodem Spiritu recta sapere, & de eius semper consolatione gaudere.

COncede nos famulos tuos quæsumus Domine Deus perpetua mentis & corporis sanitate

tate gaudere, & gloriosa beatæ Mariæ semper virginis intercessione à præsenti liberari tristitia & æterna perfrui lætitia.

DEus qui Ecclesiam tuam B. Franciſci meritis fœtu nouæ prolis amplificas: tribue nobis ex eius imitatione terrena despicere, & cælestium donorum semper participatione gaudere. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

Sacerdos resumpta Casula prosequitur Missam, finito Offertorio, ante lotionem manuum, venit Sponsa & facit oblationem, & subsequuntur eam parentes & amici.

Item communicat Sponsa post sumptionem Sanguinis. Finita Missa Sacerdos aspergit eam aquâ lustrali & traditis ei in manu dextra Cruce, & in sinistra Cereo accenso, præcedentibus Ministris, ducit eam ad locum, vbi aliæ Sorores stant eam expectantes, quam (dum

aduenerit) in osculo Charitatis recipiunt, & deinde ad Chorum illam deducunt, Ministris cum Sacerdote, interim ad Templum reuertentibus, vbi se exuunt. Sorores verò cantabunt Te Deum laudamus, *& dum cantatur omnes amplexetur ducente illam nouitiarum Magistra.*

MODVS ADMITtendi Sorores Tertij Ordinis S. Francisci ad Professionem.

IMprimis inchoatur Missa & cantato Euangelio, interrogatur Sponsa ante Cancellos quid petat? ipsa respondet, & fit breuis Concio, & postea dicuntur Litaniæ. pag. 261. *post versus dicitur sequens Oratio.*

Ore-

Oremus.

DEus qui per coæternum tibi filium cuncta creasti, quique mundum peccatis inueteratum per mysterium sanctæ Incarnationis renouare dignatus es, te suppliciter exoramus, vt eiusdem Domini nostri Iesu Christi gratia, super hanc famulam tuam *vel* (has famulas tuas) abrenuntiationem sæculi profiteri cupientem *vel* (cupientes) clementer respicere digneris, per quam Spiritu mentis suæ renouata *vel* (renouatæ) veterem hominem cum suis actibus exuat *vel* (exuant,) & nouum qui secundum Deum creatus est induere mereatur. *vel* (mereantur.) Per eundem Christum, &c.

Benedictio veli.

℣. Adiutorium noſtrum in nomine Domini.
℟. Qui fecit cælum & terram.
℣. Sit nomen Domini benedictum.
℟. Ex hoc nunc & vſque in ſæculum.
℣. Dominus vobiſcum.
℟. Et cum ſpiritu tuo.

Oremus.

SVppliciter te Domine deprecamur, vt ſuper hanc veſtem capiti Ancillæ tuæ imponendam bene†dictio tua copioſa deſcẽdat, vt ſit hæc veſtis Ancillæ tuæ bene† dicta & ſan†ctificata. Per Chriſtum, &c.

Si ſint plures.

SVppliciter te Domine deprecamur, vt ſuper has veſtes capitibus Ancillarum tuarum imponendas

nendas bene † dictio tua copioſa deſcendat, vt ſint hæ veſtes Ancillarum tuarum bene † dictæ & ſancti † ficatæ. Per Chriſtum, &c.

Oremus.

CAput fidelium omniũ Deus, & totius corporis Saluator Eccleſiæ, hoc operimentum velaminis quod famula tua *vel* (famulæ tuæ) pro tuo tuæque caſtiſſimæ genitricis ſemper virginis amore ſuo capiti eſt impoſitura *vel* (ſuis capitibus ſunt impoſituræ) dextera tua ſancti † fica; vt hoc quod per illud datur intelligi (tua pietate) corpore pariter & animo incontaminata ſemper cuſtodiat, *vel* (incontaminatæ ſemper cuſtodiant) vt quando ad Sanctorum remunerationem perpetuam cum prudentibus virginibus etiam ipſa præparata aduenerit, *vel* (ipſæ præparatæ aduenerint,) te perducente, ad ſupernæ fælicitatis

nuptias introire mereatur. *vel* (mereantur.) Qui viuis & regnas, &c.

Benedictio Annuli.

Oremus.

BEne † dic Domine Annulum istum famulæ tuæ, *vel* (Annulos istos famularum tuarum) vt filio tuo vnigenito desponsari valeat *vel* (valeant) in puritate & charitate, & cum eodem in Spiritu sancto vinculo indissolubili vniri.

Tunc aspergit velum, Annulum & Sponsam, vel *vela, Annulos & Sponsas aqua benedicta. Deinde Sacerdos imponit ei* vel *eis velum dicens.*

ACcipe virgo Sponsa Christi velum sacrum, quod feras ante tribunal Iudicis, cui flectitur omne genu cœlestium & terre-

terrestrium & infernorum, quo cognoscaris mundum contempsisse, & Christo Iesu Sponso virginum veraciter & humiliter totoque cordis affectu Sponsam perpetuam te subdidisse, qui te ab omni aduersitate defendat, bene † dicat & ad vitam æternam perducat. ℟. Amen. *Si fuerint plures Sponsæ idem repetitur ad singulas. Et cantatur* Regnum mundi, *quod à Sponsa inchoatur & à choro prosequitur, ipsa cantante versum &* Gloria Patri *nisi ignoret cantum, tunc supplet aliqua in choro eius vices, his finitis dicit Sacerdos.*

Oremus.

DEus Indulgentiæ Pater, qui seueritatem tuæ districtionis temperans, indulsisti, ne filius portet iniquitatem Patris, & qui mira dispensatione, etiam malis bene vtens, tuæ dignationis gratiam

tiam per eos frequenter operaris, quæsumus clementiam tuam vt huic famulæ tuæ *vel* (his famulabus tuis) non obsistat, quod velum sanctæ Religionis & abrenuntiationis vanitatum huius sæculi per nos tantâ & tali re indignos suscipiat, *vel* (suscipiant) sed ministerium quod per nos exhibetur exterius, tu interius per donum Sancti Spiritus exequaris. Per Dominum, &c.

Oremus.

SAncte Spiritus, qui dignatus es te Deum ac Dominũ reuelare mortalibus, immensam tuæ bonitatis clementiam suppliciter exoramus, vt sicut vbi vis spiras, sic & huic famulæ tuæ *vel* (his famulabus tuis) affectum deuotionis indulgeas, quæ tua sapientia est condita *vel* (sunt conditæ) tuâ quoque prouidentiâ gubernetur, *vel* (gubernentur) eamque

vel

vel (easque) iuxta consuetam tibi gratiam vnctio tua de omnibus doceat. Et per intercessionem beatissimi Patris nostri Francisci, quem præcipuum huius sanctæ Institutionis legislatorem dedisti, & omnium Sanctorum quos inuocat *vel* (inuocant) fac eam *vel* (eas) à vanitate sæculi veraciter conuerti, & sicut es omnium peccatorum remissio, deprimentes impietatis obligationes in ea *vel* (eis) dissolue & ad obseruantiam huius sancti propositi fac eam *vel* (eas) certatim feruere; vt in tribulationibus & angustijs, tua indeficienti consolatione valeat *vel* (valeant) respirare, ac sobriè, iustè & piè per veram humilitatem atque Obedientiam in feruida Charitate fundata viuendo, quod te donante inchoauit *vel* (inchoauerunt) fælici perseuerantia compleat; *vel* (compleant)

quod

quod ipſe præſtare digneris, qui cum Deo Patre ſanctoque vnigenito viuis & regnas Deus, &c.

Hic Sponſa clara voce facit Profeſſionē in manu Prælati vel Abbatiſſæ, qua emiſſa, Prælatus vel Abbatiſſa dicat. Et ego ſi hæc obſeruaueris promitto tibi ex parte Dei vitam æternam. *Deinde detur cuique ſtatim Annulus dicendo*: Accipe Annulum fidei, dilectionis & caſtitatis in nomine Sanctiſſimæ Trinitatis, vt deſponſata filio Dei, ipſe te vt dilectam Sponſam illæſam ſemper cuſtodiat: vt omni ſæculi amore contempto nullum præter ipſum vnquam amatorem admittas.

Deinde proſequitur verſum.

℣. Confirma hoc Deus quod operatus es in nobis.

℟. A templo tuo quod eſt in Ieruſalem.

Oremus.

DEus qui famulam tuam *vel* (famulas tuas) à ſæculi vanitate conuerſam *vel* (conuerſas) ad amorem ſupernæ vocationis accendis, pectori illius *vel* (pectoribus illarum) purificando illabere, & gratiam per quam in te perſeueret, ei *vel* (perſeuerent, eis) infunde, vt protectionis tuæ munita *vel* (munitæ) præſidijs, quod te donante promiſit, impleat *vel* (promiſerunt, impleant) & ſuæ Profeſſionis executrix effecta *vel* (executrices effectæ) ad ea quæ perſeuerantibus in te promittere dignatus es, pertingat. *vel* (pertingant.) Per Chriſtum Dominum noſtrum. ℟. Amen.

Oremus.

OMnipotens sẽpiterne Deus caſtorum corporum benignus inhabitator, & incorruptarum inhabitator animarum, qui huma-

humanam ſubſtantiam in primis parentibus diabolica fraude vitiatam, ita in verbo, per quod omnia facta ſunt, reparas, vt eam non ſolum ad primæ originis Innocentiam reuoces, ſed etiam ad experientiam quorundam bonorum quæ in ſæculo nouo habenda ſunt perducas, & obſtrictos adhuc conditioni mortalium, iam ad ſimilitudinem prouehas Angelorũ, reſpice ſuper hanc famulam tuam, *vel* (has famulas tuas) quæ in manu tua continentiæ ſuæ propoſitum collocans *vel* (collocantes) tibi deuotionem offert. *vel* (offerunt.) Et præſta vt in ea *vel* (eis) ſit per donum Spiritus ſancti prudens modeſtia, ſapiens benignitas, grauis lenitas, & caſta libertas, in charitate ferueat, *vel* (ferueant) & nihil præter te diligat, *vel* (diligant) laudabiliter viuat, *vel* (viuant) laudarique non appetat,

petat, *vel* (appetant) te in ſanctitate corporis, te in animæ ſuæ puritate glorificet, *vel* (animarum ſuarum puritate glorificent) amore te timeat, *vel* (timeant) amore tibi ſeruiat, *vel* (ſeruiant) tu ei *vel* (eis) ſis gaudium, tu voluntas, tu in mœrore ſolatium, tu in ambiguitate conſilium, in iniuria defenſio, in tribulatione patientia, in paupertate abundantia, in ieiunio cibus, in infirmitate medicina, in te habeat *vel* (habeant) omnia quem diligere appetat *vel* (appetant) ſuper omnia, per te quod profeſſa eſt cuſtodiat, *vel* (profeſſæ ſunt cuſtodiant) carnem macerando caſtiget, *vel* (caſtigent) & mundum cum ſuo principe vincat, *vel* (vincant) quatenus virtutum floribus adornata *vel* (adornatæ) cæleſtem Sponſum cum oleo præparationis expectet, ac lampade accenſa *vel*

(expe-

(expectent, ac lampadibus accensis) cum prudentibus virginibus Regalem ianuam introeat *vel* (introeant) & in agni perpetuo comitatu sine fine permaneat. *vel* (permaneant) Per Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, &c.

Oremus.

DEus qui renuntiantibus sæculo mansiones paras in cælo, dilata huius famulæ tuæ cor *vel* (harum famularum tuarum corda) cælestibus bonis, vt abiectis mundanis desiderijs & pompis in vitæ perfectionem te sequi valeat *vel* (valeant) agnum sine macula, vtque vsque in finem feruidæ charitatis compagine teneatur, vnanimis *vel* (teneantur, vnanimes) continentiæ præcepta custodiat, sobria, simplex, & quieta *vel* (custodiant, sobriæ, simplices, & quietæ) gratis sibi datam suæ Professionis gratiam fuisse cogno-

cognoscat *vel* (cognoscant) concordet illius *vel* (illarum) vita cum nomine,& Professio sentiatur in opere. Per Christum Dominum nostrum, &c.

His completis conuertat se Sacerdos ad Sponsam (ceu Sponsas) ei (vel eis) benedicit: dicens:

BEne † dicat te *vel* (vos) conditor cæli & terræ, Deus Pater omnipotens qui te *vel* (vos) eligere dignatus est ad beatæ Matris Iesu Christi Domini nostri consortium, vt integram & immaculatam virginitatem quam professa es *vel* (professæ estis) coram Deo & Angelis eius conserues, *vel* (conseruetis) propositum teneas, *vel* (teneatis) castitatem diligas, *vel* (diligatis) patientiam custodias, *vel* (custodiatis) vt sic coronam virginitatis percipere merearis. *vel* (mereamini.) Per eundem Christum Dominum

minum noſtrum. ℟. Amen. *Et ſtatim intonatur* Veni Creator Spiritus. *Proſequente choro cum verſibus & collectis vt ſupra in veſtitione* pag. 270. *Et continuatur Miſſa, finita Miſſa cantatur* Te Deum laudamus *eo finito verſus.*

℣. Confirma hoc Deus quod operatus es in nobis.

℟. A templo tuo quod eſt in Ieruſalem.

Oremus.

ACtiones noſtras quæſumus Domine aſpirando præueni, & adiuuando proſequere, vt cuncta noſtra oratio & operatio à te ſemper incipiat & per te cepta finiatur. Per Chriſtum Dominum noſtrum. ℟. Amen.

FINIS.

PRæcipimus hanc formam ſemper obſeruari tam in veſtitione quam Profeſſione Sororũ noſtri Conventus tertiariarum Anglicarum Bruxellenſium. Datum in noſtro Minorũ Conventu Bruxellenſi 25. Octobris 1622.

F. ANDREAS A SOTO
Commiſſarius Generalis.

Being debter aſwell to Nouices as to Profeſſed, I haue thought good to adde ſome briefe inſtructiõs aſwell for Nouices in their courſe of liſe, & in temptations: as alſo for the profeſſed Siſters, who proportionably may apply the ſame things to themſelues.

BREEFE INSTRV-ctions for Novices taken out of S. Dioniſe the Carthuſian.

LEt them firſt conſider, with what fervour and diligence they haue forſaken the world, and all things which they had, their Parents, kindred, acquaintance and familiar friends; their natiue Country, richeſſe, their deare & friendly company, for to come to this life of Penance, and die to themſelues, and to the world; which could not proceed from any little affection. Let them conſider alſo how bash fully humbly, and earneſtly they haue

haue demanded to be received. Moreover how after they were receiued, they did beginne to cõport themselues modestly, devoutly & orderly in all obedience: wherfore let them alwayes remember of this beginning, and be not weary or draw backe, nor presume, nor be elevated, nor wax cold, nor become more bold, or negligent, but encrease, continue and perseuer fruitfully, and holyly euen to the end, in so happy a beginning. To this end in a figure it was commanded to the children of Israel, after they were gone forth out of Egipt Exod 13. *Remember this day in the which our Lord brought you out of Egipt*, from the Iron fournace, & servitude of clay and bricke. So let them not cease to remember how graciously and powerfully the holy Ghost hath delivered

them out of the wicked world, from the bonds of carnalitie, from the yoake of the diuell, from the most hard and most vile servitude of sinne, yea from the paines of hell, which they had merited, and wherein they had fallen, if God by his assistance, had not with, drawen them. Wherfore one of the Fathers answered to one, who asked him how he should comport himselfe: *Consider what thou hast bene the first day when thou didst depart from the world, and when thou wast received into the Cloister, and remaine the same alwayes.* Let them consider how filthy a thing it is in a Cloister, to become tepide and sloathfull, to be deceived & vanquished by the enemie: whence it is said in the Apocalipse cap. 2. *I haue against thee, because thou hast left thy first charitie.* And cap. 3. *because thou*

thou art luke warme I will begin to vomit thee, out of my mouth. And the vessel of Election hath said. Heb.10. *If we sinne willingly, after the knowledge of the truth received, now there is not left an host for sinnes.*

2. Let them be alwayes on their guard, least they be besieged by the enemies. Yea let them endeavour alwayes to be armed, & prepared to the conflict against all tentatiõs, being alwayes feate full, according to what shall be said hereafter, which is also the counsell of S. Peter. *Be sober and watch, because your adversarie the diuell, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devoure.*

3. Let them keepe themselues from all rash iudgements, and contempt of any one, as also take heede that by the examples of those who comport themselues

negligently, they be not deceiued, and so become sloathfull: but let them seeke the discourse and conversation of those, who may more edefie them, and then endeavour to ioyne themselues to their company: in the meane time let them not be so bold, as to iudge of others, but leaue them to their iudges.

4. Let them take heede, that they be not deceived by some apparence of good; for the most maligne enemie, seeing that he cãnot entrappe the fervent spirits by any evident euill; doth endeavour to deceiue them, by things which appeare good, and are not so: wherfore let thẽ discouer themselues, their suggestions, & secret tentations of their hearts, to men that are capable to discerne them, as shalbe said hereafter.

5. Let them take heed, that their

their obſervance be reaſonable,& diſcreet, and not preſently breake themſelues by watchings, abſtinences, and other ſuch like excerciſes: that they cannot continue the way of their religious Pilgrimage.

6. Let them conſider that the cauſe which they haue in hand with God, is vnſpeakably great, and weigh profoundly, that in short time they shalbe iudged by him. For it is altogether neceſſarie, that during the time of this short and uncertaine preſent life, they should acquire meritoriouſly the eternall beatitude, or incurre infernall damnation; ſo that if they duely conſider and weigh this, they will patiently and willingly remaine in the Cloiſtre, & in their cell, although they should be vp to the necke in vermine.

Laſtly for to maintaine, defend

& profite themselues as it is conuenient; let them not cease to invocate God, and let them not faile to loue, honour, and supplicate the Blessed Virgin Advocate of Mankinde; as also other Saints: according to their devotion: to this end I haue here beneath translated the prayers, which are vsed at their cloathing; that they may with the more devotion be attentiue vnto them in that act, as also vse them during the time of their Novice ship. But first I will giue out of the same author, certaine Rules against temptations: because ordinarily the diuell, troupes of sinnes, & passed customes, doe assaile and make warre against Novices, so that in them the common saying is verified Iob 7. *the life of man on earth is but a continuall tentation or warre.* Whence commeth, that many

Novices

Novices overcome in the combat, doe yeeld and fall for want of instruction of the manner and meanes to make resistance. Many profitable things haue bene written both of generall and particular remedies, against tentations, I will briefely speake of some of them.

Briefe Rules against Temptations.

FIrst let them endeavour to accomplish that of the wiseman, Eccl. 2. *Sonne comming to the seruice of God, stand in iustice, and in feare, and prepare thy soule to tentation.* And know, that as S. Paule saith, 2. Tim. 2. *None are crowned, but those who fight manfully*; and that the elect Act 14. *By many tribulations must enter into the kingdome of God.* Wherfore the first &

common remedie against temptations is to know their, imperfections, frailtie, and insufficiencie, and confidently to haue recourse to Gods assistance, vnceassantly & ardently invocating his aide, in saying *Deus in adiutorium meum intende.* And so they must, continually hope in God, and neuer presume of their proper forces or merits.

The second remedie is to hũble & misprise themselues profoundly, yea to esteeme themselues as nothing in all things before God; for he cannot be held by the diuell, who is so little, and as nothing in his owne estimation: but presently he slips out of his clawes, and is receiued by God, who exalts and comforts those who are so humbled.

The third remedie is, alwayes to consider the presence of God almightie

almightie, principally his iudgement, and aboue all to consider prudently, and greatly feare the eternall sentence.

The 4. is to consider clearly, what the tẽtatiõs are, what are the enemies of the elect, what they seeke, wherto they tend, what they incessantly machinate: truly they are most cruell, most cautelous, most envious, and finally seeke no other thing, than the eternall damnation of men, & that in the meane time, they may be withdrawen from God, depriued of all grace and vertue, made subiect to them, and sullied with all vices.

They neuer cease to invent & prosecute such things, after a thousand wayes, and practises, wherfore by how much more they know these more assuredly, by so much more foolishly they

shall doe, if they consent to them; and doe not resist them with all their force, & affections. Would any one enter into a wood of theeues, of whom he knew he should be strangled.

The 5. to thinke diligently, what domage they incurre by giving way to temptation; for by this, they loose their soueraigne God, and only good; they are despoyled of all charitie, grace, and precedent merits. They cease to be the daughters, servants, friends, souldiers, heires, & members of their God; Creatour and Saviour, and consequently become his enemies and adversaries, &c.

The 6. is to behold continually how victoriously, & excellently, the servants of God haue resisted temptations; and what glorie they haue gotten by such triumph;

triumph; in reading the liues of the holy Fathers, S. Antony, S. Hilarion, S. Benedict, S. Francis, they may be more fully instructed.

The 7. is to contemplate God almightie, his holy Angels, and all the heauenly citizens beholding their conflict against temptations, ready to assist them, ioyfull of their resistance, and victory: and on the other side, consider how much the malignant spirits doe rejoice together, and mocke at their fall and transgression, according to that of the Psalmist Psal. 12. *They that troubled me, will reyoice if I be moved.* O doe not offend leaue and mispriſe God, who is your Creatour, and Saviour. Doe not contristate his B. mother, most ready to helpe you, and most zealous of your saluation: doe not dishonour your Angel

Guardian, who moſt ſincerely loues you, keepes you moſt carefully, and admonishes you moſt faithfully, rather to follow and hearken after the ſuggeſtions of the diuell, than to the moſt wholſome exhortations of the Angels. Doe not make your ſelues odious and contemptible to the triumphant Church of the celeſtiall court. Doe not yeeld your ſelues to be a shame, mokquerie, & prey to the moſt envious & moſt cruell enemies. But rather, pray with the wiſe man. Eccl. 23. *O Lord, Father and dominatour of my life; leaue me not in their counſell: leaſt I fall in the ſight of mine adwerſaries, and mine enemies rejoice.*

The 8. is preſently to reſiſt in the beginning of the tentation, principally in the tentations of the flesh: from which as from

their

their obiects, occaſions, incitations, and ſubiects, they are incontinently to turne the eies of the ſpirit, and of the body; the imagination, fancy, memorie, and convert them to behold, and conſider ſome holy and compunctiue things, as beholding the crucifix and the Paſſion, the laſt endes, weighing alſo the breuitie and incertitude of this preſent life. Moreouer they ought to be magnanimous, and laudably vindicatiue: that ſo they may afflict the diuells their enemies: by ſo much more earneſtly and vnceſſantly addicting themſelues to all workes of vertue, principally of profound humilitie, Obediēce, & Charitie, by how much more they endeavour to withdraw them from their ſaluation: ſay with the true warrier Pſal. 17. *I will purſue mine enemies, and*

ouertake

ouertake them. And I will not returne till they faile. I will breake them neither shall they be able to stand: they shall fall vnder my feete.

The 9. is, to ponder the baseneſſe, impietie, and turpitude of tentation, and vice: and ſo preſently with an indignation, turne themſelues, as from a ſtinking & moſt deteſtable carron. Euen as a marchant would with indignation refuſe iron, or dung, that the buyer should giue him for gold, or balſome; ſo when for our Lord God, eternall infinit & moſt worthy, and for the moſt pretious guift of his grace & glorie, the world, the flesh, the diuell, should propound vaine, filthy, and baſe things, let them anſwere, with great contempt and not vouchſafe to behold or hearken to thoſe, who ſuggeſt ſuch things,

things, nay rather according to that which the ſtandard bearer of Chriſt Ieſus, Bleſſed S. Francis hath tought vs, let them ſay to the tempter, *Open thy mouth and I will caſt dong into it.*

The 10. remedie is, to diſcover aſwell in confeſſion, as out of it, what paſſeth, & is hidde in they ſpirit, to diſcreet, good, and charitable men, and humbly obey to their counſells, and inſtructions.

The tẽpter doth ſeeke meanes to deceiue vs, propounding falſe and perverſe things, vnder the ſpecies of true and good, and doth lay ſnares and guiles: wherfore he feares to be diſcovered. For according as Chriſt hath ſaid in the Goſpell. Ioan. 3. *Euery one that doth ill, hateth the light, and commeth not to the light that his workes may not be made manifeſt.* Wherfore a man hath then al-

moſt

moſt vanquished the diuell, and diſcouered all his deceits, and trecheries; when he hath declared all the ſecrets of his heart to men of iudgement. It is alſo and act of humilitie and diſcretion, in ſuch ſort to diſcouer the interiour, and to deſire to be wel inſtructed therein, and therfore let them overcome thus the pride of the diuell.

Many other things may be added, as to haue recourſe to our B. Lady to the Saincts towards whome they haue particular devotion. And principally to haue a ſerious conſideration of the Paſſion of our Saviour. For Chriſt hath giuen great power and ineſtimable vertue to his Paſſion & death, wherby he hath redeemed humane kind. It contayneth in it ſelfe an infinit merit, becauſe by a ſoveraigne and moſt ardent cha-

ritie, moſt perfect Obedience, moſt profound humilitie, moſt firme patience, moſt ſtrong conſtancy and moſt mild ſpirit he hath ſubmitted himſelfe to it; his divinitie added to his humanitie did giue to it an immenſe efficacy of merites; wherfore by how much more a man is ioyned to Chriſt, by more humble ardent, and ſtrict charitie, by ſo much more abundantly he may participate of his vertues, and merits.

If then they be tempted with any difficulty or rigour of the Order, and of its obſervance, as of the hardneſſe and auſteritie of Religion, & that it theeme greeuous and painfull to carrie the Croſſe and follow Chriſt: let them conſider diligently, what he hath ſuffered for them, how in his agony, for horrour of death he hath shed a bloudy ſweat, and

was

was ſadde euen to death, and carrying vpon his owne shoulders the heauie gibbot of the croſſe, he was moſt ignominiouſly ledde to the place of Calvarie.

If they be tempted with the delights of the flesh, or with the deſires of pleaſure, diſſolution, play, ſport, vnmeaſured laughter, let them conſider the griefe that he ſuffered for vs, when his moſt delicate flesh was torne, even to the opening of his ſides, and moſt cruelly rent, with the blowes of ſcourges, when his hands and feete were tranſpierced with rough and great nailes of Iron, when his head was crowned with thornes, and beaten with a reede.

If they be tempted with ambition, let them conſider how for our ſakes, he became *reproch of men, and out caſt of the people.* He

was

was mocked with a white garment, derided in purple, beſpitted on his face, blaſphemed, and deſpiced, handled, and ſlaine, as the moſt baſe and the moſt wicked amongſt men, for thoſe who did ſee him did mocke at him, ſaying Mat. 27. *If he be the king of Iſrael, let him now come downe from the Croſſe. &c.*

If the rigour of abſtinence, or of faſting be troubleſome, and painfull to them, if they be tempted with more delicate meat or drinke: let them remember that they *gaue him gall for his meate: and in his thirſt they gaue him vinagre to drinke.* Pſal. 68.

If the motion of Pride, the impetuoſitie of impatience, or anger aſſault them, becauſe ſome haue done them iniuries or other contrarieties; let them conſider, how moſt patiently he hath endured

dured all things, when he was carried before Pilate, with a moſt mild heart, not ſaying one word, when he was moſt enormouſly accuſed.

If rancour or motion of envie ſtrike them; let them remember how he faſtened to the Croſſe, & already environed with anguish, and prickings of death and more interiourly tranſperced: did pray for thoſe who crucifyed him.

If ſloath aſſault them, let them call to mind with what ardēt charitie he hath procured our ſaluation.

Briefely in all temptations let them interiourly conſider, what and how great things he hath vndertaken, excerciſed and ſuffered for our ſaluation; with what moſt bitter and moſt cruell death he was ſlaine; and moſt violently and moſt painfully ſtretched forth

forth on the Crosse, euen so farre forth that one might number all his bones, yea euen to the rupture of his vaines, how he was crowned with thornes, cloathed in mocquerie with a purpell robe; and his face bained in bloud, presented to the people, who cryed take him away, crucifie him. Ioan. 19.

On the other side, consider what and how great he is, he I say who hath suffered all these things; is not he, according to his divine nature, equall with the eternall Father, & according to the Humanitie which he hath hypostatically taken and vnited vnto the eternall word; more worth than all the world? Let them consider the delicatenesse of his complexion, in that he was conceiued in the most sacred wombe of the Virgin, of most pure

pure bloud: behold his Innocencie, contemplate how charitably ſtrongly, and moſt promptly he hath ſuffered all theſe paines.

Beſides this they may conſider, that at the time of his Paſſion, the griefe of compaſſion which he ſuſtained from the vngratfull & wicked Iewes was more than the corporall affliction of his Paſſion. Moreover how great pitie and compaſſion he had of his moſt deare Mother, ſeeing her bitterneſſe, paine, and compaſſion as alſo how greatly he did ſuffer in all thoſe who ſtood by, his devout diſciples, and other women.

Let them therfore carrie theſe things in their minds, and at certaine houres dayly meditate, and remeditate them, as diſtinctly, ordinatly and compaſſionatly, as if he did endute them in their ſight and preſence. According to the

forme

forme that is giuen them in the distribution of their time, in the houre glasse of the Passion which they may find in my booke of the chord of S. Francis.

Here follow some prayers which they may vse either at their cloathing, or afterward during their Noviceshipp as also some other that they may vse at their Profession.

Prayers.

O Lord Iesu Christ who art the way, without whom none cometh to the Father, I beseech thy most benigne clemency, that thou wouldest leade me by the path of regular discipline, thou also, who hast vouchsafed do call sinners, saying, *Come yee to me all that labour and are burthened and I will refresh you.* Grant

that

that this voice of thy invitation, may ſo prevaile in me, that laying downe the burden of ſinne, and taſting how ſweet thou art, I may deſerue to be ſuſtained by thy refreshment, thou alſo who haſt vouchſafed to witneſſe of thy sheepe, ſaying, *My sheepe doe heare my voice, and I know them and they know me*, acknowledge me amongſt thy sheepe, that I may alſo ſo know thee and not follow a ſtranger, but thee; nor heare the voice of ſtrangers, but thine: wherby thou doeſt ſay, *he that miniſtereth vnto me, let him follow me*. Who liueſt and raigneſt God with God the Father, in the vnitie of the holy Ghoſt, world without end. Amen.

O God moſt faithfull promiſer of eternall good things, and certaine performer, who haſt pro-

promiſed the coverture of ſaluation, and the cloathes of iucunditie, to thy faithfull: moſt humbly I beſeech thy immenſe clemencie, that this habit ſignifiyng fidelitie of heart, and contempt of the world, by thy protection may keepe me vnſpotted: and as thou haſt temporally cloathed me, with the garment of thy ſonnes Paſſiõ, ſo thou wilt make me to be cloathed with bleſſed immortalitie. Through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt thy ſonne; who liueth & raigneth God, with thee, in the vnitie of the holy Ghoſt, world without end. Amen.

A prayer for perſeuerance.

O God of peace, moſt mercifull and clement Lord, to whõ all good things are pleaſing, without whom no holy thing is begunne, no good thing finished: let the eares of thy pietie be pre-

ſent to my humilitie, and defend me from all impediments of this world, and from all ſecular deſires, and propitiouſly grant, that I may perſever in this holy purpoſe, and hauing receiued remiſſion of my ſinnes, I may deſerue to come to the company of thy elect. Through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt thy Sonne: who liueth & raigneth, God with thee, in the vnitie of the holy Ghoſt world without end. Amen.

A prayer for Gods Grace.

O God who by thy coeternall Sonne, haſt created all things, and who haſt vouchſafed by the miſterie of his holy Incarnation, to renew the world become old in ſinnes: I humbly beſeech thee, that by the grace of the ſame Ieſus Chriſt our Lord, thou wilt clemently vouchſafe to behold me thy handmaide, deſi-

rous

rous to profeſſe the rennuntiation of the world, that ſo renewed in ſpirit, I may put off the old man which its actions, and deſerue to put on the new which is created according to God. Through the ſame Lord Ieſus Chriſt thy Sonne: who liueth & raigneth, God, with thee, in the vnitie of the holy Ghoſt, world without end. Amen.

Another.

O Holy Ghoſt, who haſt vouchſafed to reveale thy ſelfe our God and Lord to mortall men, I moſt humbly beſeech the immenſe clemency of thy goodneſſe; that as thou doeſt breath where thou wilt, ſo grant to me, the affection of devotion: that as by thy wiſdome I am created, and alſo by thy providence governed; ſo according o thy wonted Grace, let thy ho-

ly vnction in all things teach me, and that by the interceſſion of our moſt bleſſed Father S. Francis: who thou haſt giuen for the principall lawgiuer of this holy inſtitution: and of all the Saincts, whom I doe now invocate; make me to be truly converted from the vanitie of this world: and as thou art the remiſſion of all ſinnes, ſo diſſolue in me, the obligations of impietie, that depreſſe me; and make me fervent in the obſervation of this holy purpoſe, that in all tribulations and adverſities, I may reſpire by thy neuer failing conſolation, and liuing ſoberly, iuſtly, and piouſly, by true humilitie, and obedience: and grounded in fervent charitie, I may with happy perſeverance accomplish, that which by thy grace I haue begun, which thou ô Lord vouchſafe to grant who with

with God the Father, and his only begotten Sonne liueſt and raigneſt world without end. Amen.

Another.

O God who doeſt inflame thoſe, who are converted from the vanitie of this world, to the prize of thy ſupernall vocation, & doeſt prepare manſions in heauen, for thoſe who renounce the world: dilate my heart with thy celeſtiall guifts, that I may remaine in this holy cõpany, with them in fraternall vnion of Charitie, vnanimous, conſtant, ſober, ſimple and quiet, obſeruing the regular inſtitutions of this holy order, and by thy aide may come to that ſpirit of perfection, which by thy inſpiration I haue conceiued. Through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt thy Sonne: who liueth & raigneth, God, with thee in the

vnitie of the holy Ghoſt, world without end. Amen.

Another for the ſame.

O Lord God creator of all things viſible and inviſible, and reparer of the world, who by thy power haſt created, and clemently redeemed me, and mercifully called me to the ſtate of euãgelicall perfection: I humbly beſeech thy immenſe clemency, that thou wouldeſt vouchſafe to illuminate, inflame, and ſtrengthen me: that aided by thy moſt benigne pietie, I may devoutly, and conſtantly perſeuer to the end in this holy Order, which by thy inſpiration I haue vndertaken: that after the end of this life, adorned with all ornaments of vertues, and jewels of ſpirituall guifts, I may deſerue to come to thee my moſt clement Father. Through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt thy

thy Sonne: who liueth and raigneth, God, with thee, in the vnitie of the holy Ghoſt world without end. Amen.

Prayers after Profeſſion.

O God who doſt inflame thoſe who are converted from the vanitie of this world, to the prize of thy ſupernall vocation; come vnto me propitiouſly purifying my breaſt, and infuſe thy grace, wherby I may perſever in thee; and armed with the helpe of thy protection, may be able to performe, what I haue promiſed; and made a fullfiller of this my Profeſſion, I may happily attaine to thoſe things, which thou haſt vouchſafed to promiſe thoſe who perſever in thee. Through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt thy Sonne who liueth &

raigneth God, with thee, in the vnitie of the holy Ghost world without end. Amen.

Another.

ALmightie and euerlasting God, benigne inhabitatour of chast minds, who by thy word, by which all things were made, hast so repared humane nature, vitiated by diabolicall deceit, in our first parents, that thou hast not only recalled it to the Innocency of its first beginning, but also hast brought it to the kuowledge of some things, which are to be had in the world to come: and carried it, as yet bound in the condition of mortalitie, to the similitude of Angels, behold me thy handmaid, who placing my confidence in thee, doe offer vp my devotion: and grant that by the guift of the holy Ghost, there may be in me prudent modestie,

wise

wiſe benignitie, graue lenitie, & chaſt libertie; that I may be fervent in charitie, and loue nothing beſides thee, may liue laudably, and not deſire to be praiſed; that I may glorifie thee in ſanctitie of body, and puritie of minde; may feare thee by loue, and by loue ſerue thee, Be thou my ioy, my will, in mourning, be thou my comfort, in doubts; my counſell, in iniurie, defenſe; in tribulation, Patience: in Povertie, abundance; in hũger, food; in infirmitie, medicine; let me haue all thĩgs in thee, whom I deſire to loue aboue all things: by thee, let me keepe what I haue profeſſed, chaſtice my flesh by mortificatiõ; & overcome the world with its pride; that ſo adorned with flowers of vertues, and with the oyle of preparatiõ: I may expect the celeſtiall bridegroome; & my lãpe being lighted with the

prudent virgins, I may enter into thy regall court,& remaine without end,in the euerlasting company of the lambe Christ Iesus, to whom with the Father and holy Ghost, be all honour and Glorie for ever more. Amen.

A prayer to our holy Father S. Francis.

O Seraphicall and most Blessed Father S. Francis. Imitatour & standardbearer of sweet Iesus crucified; who hath adorned thee, amongst other Saincts with a speciall priviledge of loue, and honour, for he hath replenished thy soule, with the light and splendour of loue; and hath renewed his sacred wounds in thy body. I beseech thee for the loue of the same benigne & mercifull Iesu, that thou be alwayes, and at all times vnto me a helper,

Father,

Father, and keeper; and an aduocate for me, vnto the ſame Lord, both in this life, and at the houre of my death. O beloued of God; I alſo humbly and earneſtly beſeech thee, to obtaine for me, of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; compunction, and remiſſion of my ſinnes: pray for me to our benigne Lord; that through his mercy and piety, he would grant me the grace to know my ſelfe; and to loue and deſire him aboue all things: and that he make me to ſerue him faithfully, all the time of my life; O Father, moſt glorious Confeſſour of God; obtaine for me, that our Lord by his mercy, & charitie, may make me thy true daughter, and diſciple, and that he replenish my ſoule with thoſe guifts where with he replenished thine; and that he make me a true obſerver

of my Rule, and Profession: & lastly that he keepe both me, and my Sisters, with all thy children: in good, and regular obseruance; and in good example; that we may be a light and patterne to the whole world. O most louing Father: I beseech thee for the loue of the blessed virgin Marie, Mother of God: to whom thou allwayes haddest great deuotion, obtaine for me, that I may alwayes reuerence her; and haue speciall deuotion to her; I also humbly begge of thee, that by the said deuotiō of thine towards her: thou be vnto me an aider and helper; when my soule shall depart from my body; and that thou vouchsafe to pray for me, that our Lord through his mercy, and by the merits of his most bitter Passion; the loue and merits of his most holy Mother; and

by

by the merits of all the Saincts of thy Order, and of all other Saincts, he may bring my ſoule to Paradiſe; and grant me to remaine with him and thee, together with his holy Saincts, and Angels for euer in his Glorie. Amen.

Inſtructions for thoſe who are profeſſed.

FIrſt let them conſider, the greatneſſe of this benefit of their vocation: for God hath not done ſo to all: but to them, he hath declared, not only his iudgements; but alſo his counſells; He hath done great things to them, by taking them not only for his ſervants, but alſo hath choſen them for his deare Friends; for he ſaith Ioan. 15. *Now I call you not ſervants, but I haue called you friends.* He hath alſo adopted them for his children; whence he

he saith 2. Cor 6. *I wilbe a Father to you, and you shal be my* daughters. Moreover he hath taken them for his Spouses, for the soules of euery one, are Spouses of Iesus Christ, saith S. Bernard. *Let your soule be espoused to him, whose beauty is admired by the sunne & moone.* Iesus Christ hath made them companions of his table, companions of his nuptiall bedde, and hath espoused them with the ring of his loue, and charitie. Hearken therfore ye daughters and see, & consider the great bountie of God vnto you, and forget your people, and the house of your Fathers forsake all carnall affections, vnaccustome your selues of all secular comportment, & forget the hurtfull habits of vice.

2. Let them consider the dignitie of a Religious state; for the

Mona-

Monaſterie is nothing elſe, but a ſchoole or citie of vertue; a place of freedome, where devout ſoules, who haue happily fled frō the arke of the enemie; fearing they should be ſurpriſed in his nets: haue aſſembled themſelues. It is alſo a terreſtriall heauen, wherein celeſtiall women, or terreſtriall Angels, who in ſpirit converſe in heauen, doe keepe their reſidence; (*Night and day*, According to the ſaying of S. Bernard) *to celebrate the praiſes of God.* Bleſſed S. Laurence Iuſtinian calleth it a *Garden encloſed, Paradiſe of delights, Schoole of vertue, Tabernacle of Alliance, Parlour of the Spouſe, Station of Warriers, Houſe of Sanctitie, Miſtris of Religion, particular Mirrour of holy Obedience.*

3. Let them conſider the vtilitie of a Religious ſtate, wherin one

one is tryed and excercised in vertue, reprehended for negligence, drawne by word and example to more perfect things. Here they are constrained to deplore their imperfections, here they are awakened by the fervour of others, instructed by others humilitie, moued by the obedience of one, and by the patience of another: Here they are confounded to be more slow than others. The correction of the one is the admonition of the other. The dãger of one serueth for a looking glasse to the other; and for to say nothing of the influence of the more abundant grace, of the greater assurance, and tranquillitie at the houre of death, of the commoditie that they haue to be vacant to God, &c. it is also a signe of the divine Predestinatiõ. For Iesus Christ hath promised

that

that euery *one, who hath left Father, Mother, Brothers or Sisters, &c. for him; shall recciue an hundred fold, and shall possesse life euerlasting.* Wherfore remembring these things, and participating of so great good, let them persever in the observance of the Rule, and religious conversation, and God will giue them a crowne of life.

4. Let them consider that how great soeuer the dignitie and vtilitie of a Religious state is, yet they cannot come to the height of this dignitie, but by labour; if therfore the place of dignitie delight them, let them first excercise themselues in the way of labour: by this path, one cometh to maiestie: wherfore let them know that since they haue bene disposed to enrolle themselues in Religion, they are ranged into the

the ſocietie of Ieſus Chriſt, into the number of his Apoſtles, and ſo ought to conſider his words. *He that will follow me let him renounce himſelfe, and take vp his croſſe, &c.* therfore let them prepare their ſoules to fight, for ſithence they haue called the diuell and hel to the duel, he will come with all his forces and malice, as another Aman, againſt Mardocheus, for to vanquish & ſurmount them; in the meane time let them be aſſured that the God of all conſolation will aſſiſt them, and will not permit that they be tempted aboue their force, but will giue aide in tentation, to the end that they may ſuſtaine it.

5. As they haue firmely reſolued, to perſeruer in Religion; ſo let them valiantly follow him, that is their head & Lord; follow him

him through fire & water; *Learne of him becauſe he is meeke and humble of heart.* Mat. 11. let them cruciſie their flesh, all vice, and concupiſcence, mortifie, deny, & ouercome themſelues; offering their wills to God by perfect obedience: let them ſerue God in feare, and reuerence; with great care and fervour of heart, and neuer ceaſe to adhere and pleaſe the almightie, and incomprehenſible God, contemning all baſe & vnworthy comforts and conſolations: certes, if their comportment be ſuch, they shall haue here a Paradiſe on earth, in adhering moſt ſweetly in tranquillitie of ſpirit, to a ſoveraigne and infinit good: and ſoone after, the celeſtiall Paradiſe, where they shall ſee in the kingdome of heauen the good things of our Lord, which the eie hath not ſeene, nor

eare

eare hath heard, neither hath it ascended into the heart of man what God hath most largely prepared for the true Religious, who accomplish his counsells.

6. Let them consider the great good, which those enioy who formerly in this life haue cõtemned the world with all its delights, riches, aud honours; and behold what glorie, excellency, praise, and inestimable honour, they haue gotten in a little time, by paines: lo now they are counted amongst the children of God, & their lot is amongst the Saints: they are now eternally assured of their vnspeakable beatitude, and of the most sweet possession of the most high Deitie, and now for euer, are by so much the more happy, by how much during this short life, they haue bene found to haue served God more sincerely,

rely, diligently and amourously.

7. They may set before their eies, the example of the Saincts: by often reading and seriously pondering their actions, to the end, that in as much as they may; they imitate them: aboue all, let them set before their eies, the example of our holy Father S. Francis; that as they haue made Profession to be his children, so they may be true heires of his vertues: and for the commoditie of those who perhaps cannot haue time to read his life, I haue thought good to set downe here in a briefe manner, the principall things of his life, that in making vse of this briefe extraction, they may set it alwayes before their eics, and so regulate their actions conformably.

A briefe

A briefe extraction of some perfections of S. Francis, which may serue as a patterne for all his children.

THe first Perfection of S. Francis, was that with all endeavour, and with all his forces he did labour to deplore his sinnes; and did willingly confesse them, & that without delay, and afterward in as much as he could, did take heede not to fall againe.

The 2. was that he did put all creatures aboue himselfe, and himselfe vnder all. And this was his reason: because (as he said) he had offended that great Lord, who had made all creatures, and who hath so much honoured vs, that for our loue, he hath taken humane flesh: which assumed did participate of all creatures.

tures. For this he was obedient with a good heart, and good will, to all not only to greater, or equall or leſſer; but alſo to all creatures in as much as was lawfull for him.

The 3. Perfection was the loue of God, wherby he had rooted out of his heart all worldly and humane creatures: neither did he find any foundation, root, or reſt, but in him who made his heart. For this he was wont to caſt his heart vnto Chriſt, who had made it, and ſo excerciſed his heart in him, that without any labour, when he would, he could fix his mind on him, and from thence was alwayes attentiue to God, in all places, and in all times.

The 4. Perfection was, that he was of ſuch patience, that he did endeavour to loue him more

that

that did doe or ſpeake euill vnto him: and with all his heart, and with a good will, would more willingly ſerue him without all bitterneſſe of minde, becauſe as God out of his liberalitie did giue all good things to him; ſo he did belieue that God did permit all euill things to happen vnto him; to manifeſt therby his ſinnes vnto him; & that ſo he himſelfe might acknowledge and take notice of them: and that God did punish them in this preſent life: and therfore he did much loue him that did doe or ſpeake ill of him: becauſe by, his mediation, as by his meſſenger, God did giue vnto him ſo great good, to purifie him from his ſinnes.

The 5. was that he loned all good men, and did compaſſionate all euill; and did honour all, reputing himſelfe the baſeſt yea worſt

of

of all men. And this becauſe, he did not know, whether the good which he did doe, did pleaſe God, or whether he should perſeuer therein: neither did he know the end, wherto another might come: and for this, he iudged none. Whē he did heare any euill of any one, either he did excuſe him, or in hearing did shew himſelfe ſadde, or did wholy turne the words of the ſpeaker to ſome other matter.

The 6. was, that he did much loue reprehenſions, & them who reprehended him. And if any ill thing was ſpoken of him; he granted it: if they did ſay any good, he excuſed himſelfe, and ſaid, that he did no good: knowing in his minde, that God did doe and giue all good.

The 7. was, that he did willingly ſerue all, and would ſcarce

permit any one to ſerue him: reputing himſelfe vnworthy of all ſeruice; for, ſaid he, Chriſt did not come to be miniſtred vnto; but to miniſter; If therfore any one did ſerue him, in any neceſſitie, in his heart he gaue thankes to God: who gaue him that will to ſerue, and to be able to doe it.

The 8. was, that he did endeavour to contemplate all Gods benefits in himſelfe, in others, yea in all creatures; and did giue thankes to God for all of them; & afterward humbling himſelfe, did ſay, who am I? that I should giue thankes for others, when I am not ſufficient to giue thankes for the leaſt part of the good, that God hath done vnto me; eſpecially ſith I am ſo poore a creature.

The 9. was the guard of his tongue, without which all good is eaſily loſt for he did abſtaine not

not only from evill hurtfull or vnciuill words; but also from all superfluous & vaine talke: which doth expell deuotion.

10. Aboue all things he did take care, that in euery word of his, there should be truth, goodnesse, and humilitie. Because the words of a man, ought to begin in truth, proceed in goodnesse, & end in humilitie; and be measured in breuitie.

The 11. was his great Poverty; which he esteemed as his Lady, and Spouse, because that it had bene so dignified in our Saviour, and his Blessed Mother. And therfore he left this as an inheritance to all his children.

The 12. was, his prompt obedience, which he esteemed aboue all other things: because it did so shine in our Saviour, who was obedient to his Father, euen to

the death of the crosse, and therfore our holy Father said, he would as willingly obey to a Novice of one dayes standing, as to the eldest of the house; if he were made his Superiour.

To omit many other rare Perfections, which the devout Reader may gather in his life: the last & principall was his tender compassion, of our Saviours Passion: whereby he did merite to receiue the stigmats or markes of Christ Iesus crucifyed.

After this example, devout soules in reading the liues of Saincts, may gather the principall perfections, or rarest vertues, which haue bene in the Saincts; that they may lay them vp in store, to benefit themselues by their examples.

To conclude I will adde the words of S. Hierome in the first

chapter

chapter of his Rule. *Christ* (saith he) *hath instructed women placed in Monasteries; what manner of life they should principally take; saying, Mat.* 19. *If thou wilt enter into life keepe the commandements, and what those are he hath tought, saying, thou shall loue the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and thy neigbour as thy selfe: diligently consider; that without the fullfilling of those commandements, no man entreth to liue with God: therfore the Apostle doth not glorie in the tongues of Angels, and men; nor in the knowledge of the misteries of God; nor in the spirit of Prophecy, but in charitie. This alone doth make men liue to God; This maketh Religious, monkes & Nunnes. Without charitie, Monasteries are but hell, and those who dwell in them, are but diuells. But with charitie, Monasteries are Paradises, on earth: and those who abide in*

them, are Angels: therfore my most beloved daughters, although long fasts doe make your bodies leane, and abiect; and poore garments deforme them; and long offices be performed, if charitie be wanting within, you are not as yet come to the lowest degree of Religion. It is a good & pleasant thing for Sisters to dwell in one, that is in one bond of loue, and affection of charitie: who doe helpe one another in tentation, & mutually administer to each other, the offices of charitie and pietie. Wherfore let there be one heart, one soule, in you, corporally united; for certainely there is no life worse, than to liue together in body, and not in minde and they are truly vnhappy, in whom there is not one will, but diverse: therfore let there be alwayes in you, one affection, one fraternitie, one will, one proportion of manners, one ioy, one sadnesse: let

not

not that which in our Lord is pleasing to one, be displeasing to another; neither that which is the ioy of one, be the griefe of another: and so ye may haue the proposed end, and vertue of Religion, if yee dwell vnanimously in the house of Lord.

Instructions for the conservation of mutuall charitie.

FIrst you ought to consider your Sister, not as flesh and bloud, but as the image of God: which he most affectionately loueth, and to reforme it, hath giuẽ his only Sonne, he hath created all this world for its corporall service, and spirituall assistance: he hath also ordayned those most noble creatures the Angels, to labour for its profit: the Sonne of God, Christ Iesus hath giuen his proper life for it; for he hath loued vs, and washed vs from our sinnes, by his bloud. Iudge whe-

ther it be reasonable to hate those, whom he so infinitely loueth; or contemne those, whom Iesus Christ cherisheth.

2. Consider your Sister, not as a stranger; but as one, who is very neere vnto you, whose prosperitie or adversitie concernes your selfe; if any one loueth his carnall Sister: much more ought you to loue your spirituall Sister engendred with you by the same mother, the holy Church and Religion: and of the same Father Christ Iesus. We come from the wombe of our Mother, to miseries, sinne, and death, wherein is no true fraternitie; but we are engendred in the bosome of the Church & Religiõ, to ioy, merits, and life everlasting wherein is perfect affinitie.

3. Regard not your Sister, although shee be angry and envious

vious towards you, as euill or iniurious to you, but as one who doth cauſe you great good & honour; for in ſpeaking ill of you, or contradicting or diſcourſing of you, &c. she is the occaſion, that you walke more carfully, & liue more religiouſly, & therfore conſider that, by her meanes you may heape vp merits.

4. At all times, when you find in your minde, any ill will, or averſion againſt your Siſter; doe not ſuffer the cockle ſowed by the craftie enimie, to encreaſe in you; but preſently apply ſome remedy: which you may doe, by vnceſſantly praying God for her: If afterward the occaſion preſent it ſelfe, or if you can, ſeeke the occaſion to praiſe that Siſter; shew her a good countenance, & and talke with her of things that occurre: ſo you shall become a

child, according to that of our Saviour, Matt. 18. *Vnlesse you be conuerted and become as little children; you shall not enter into the kingdome of heauen.* You shalbe a little child, not in sense, but in malice, a child, not in imbecillitie, but in sinceritie.

5. Doe not contract ouer much familiaritie, or immoderate friendship with any one Sister: for this is not charitie; but a moth of charitie, the ruine of peace, vertue, and perfection; and is obtained with offense to others: for from this root, most commonly buddes forth these branches: 1. a continuall remembrance of those whom you loue; with an obliuion of God. 2. many idle discourses, and losse of time, ordained to contrition, prayer, and good workes, & not, to vanitie & detractiõs: which ordinarily follow

low ſuch familiaritie. 3. ſcandale to the other Siſters, who deteſt ſuch affections which are contrarie to a Religious life 4. a continuall anguish and care, leaſt ſome corporall euill, ſickneſſe, or diſhonour should come vnto them, 5. a continuall care to defend them, with ſuch like: which many times cauſeth diſſenſion, and ſtrife with others; wherfore cõmunicate a generall loue to all; aſſiſt all, ſpeake to all, and shew to all the ſame ſignes of familiaritie. And if you are bent to loue one, more than another; let it be in no other, but in Ieſus Chriſt your Spouſe, wherby you may the more encreaſe in his loue.

6. Contemne all tẽporall things, and wholy banish the loue of them from your heart. For oftentimes baſe and abiect things deſired, doe breake peace betweene

Sisters; and hurt Charitie. Be you ashamed, that possessing the guifts of God, with hope to be heires of God, you should dispute and quarrell for a little booke, for a cell, and such like; preferring those little and vaine things, before the good of charitie & loue.

7. Overcome your proper will, and submit it to the will of your Sisters. For Iesus Christ did not come to doe his proper will, but to be subiect to all. So you are not entred into Religion to satisfie your proper desires: but the will of our Lord. If you will know what the proper will is, which for the good of peace, you ought to forsake, S. Bernard will tell you. *Proper will* (saith he) *is not common to God and men: but is only ours: when we will any thing, not for the honour of God, nor for the will of our* Sisters; *but we doe and*

ac-

accomplish it for our ſelues, without intention to pleaſe God, or profit our Siſters, *but to ſatisfie the proper motions of our ſpirit.* This is directly oppoſite to charitie.

8. Renounce your proper iudgement, not too much confiding or relying vpon your owne opinion: for euen as amongſt carnall and imperfect perſons, diſordinate loue of earthly things, doth ordinarily raiſe ſtrifes and debates, ſo amongſt ſpirituall perſons, the diverſitie of ſenſe, and iudgement, ordinarily engendreth diſcord. Now you may obtaine this abnegation of your iudgement, by true humilitie of heart, if you eſteeme others more wiſe, and ſtayed; and your ſelues more foolish, and leſſe experienced. Hearken to S. Paule praying each one Phil. 2. *If therfore, there be any conſolation in Ieſus Chriſt, if*

any

any ſolace of charitie, if any ſocietie of ſpirit, if any bowels of commiſeration: fullfill my ioy, that you be of one meaning, hauing the ſame charitie, of one minde, agreeing in one. Nothing by contention, neither by vaine glorie, but in humilitie, each counting other better than thēſelues.

9. Thinke ſeriouſly, that there is nothing ſo great, profitable, or pretious: which may be preferred before the good of charitie, and vnion: wherfore order all your exteriour things, all your affaires, in ſuch ſort, that the fraternall charitie may not be preiudiced; but cōſerved; with the loſſe and intereſt of all other things.

10. Be neuer angry againſt your Siſter, how iuſt an occaſion ſoeuer you haue, according to your ſeeming: for anger doth blind the vnderſtanding, and looſeth the good of peace and charitie; you

may

may well be angry againſt your ſinnes, but beare alwayes a peaceable and quiet heart towards your Siſters; or at the leaſt ſtriue to appeare ſo exteriourly. Endeavour to ſuppreſſe anger, not only in your owne heart; but alſo in the hearts of your Siſters: which you may doe by cutting of the occaſions, by humble ſatisfaction, and by ſweet & courteous words.

11. Doe not promiſe to your ſelfe long life, but thinke that you may preſently die; and accuſtome your ſelfe with tranquillitie of ſpirit, to ſuffer iniuries and wrongs; from your Siſters; as you would doe, if you were at point of death: when you would not eſteeme of ſuch things, but rather apply your mind to God. wherfore euen now conſider all things which are done and ſaid, as if they did no way touch you;

and

and ſo you ſhall not be any wayes troubled; and ſhall offer all to God as voluntarie Sacrifices.

12. Conſider and reuerence Ieſus Chriſt in every one; for you ought not ſo much to conſider the perſon, as God, who by his eſſence, preſence, and power is in all things; and principally in rationall creatures: and therfore for his ſake you ought to interpret all their words, and works in good part: or if you cannot, returne to your owne ſelfe, and conſider whether there be nothing in you, that may diſpleaſe God, who is preſent: where perhaps you may find greater faults, and therfore you may the better ſupport the imperfections of others. Beſides ſuch is Gods goodneſſe that oftentimes he couereth great and heroicall vertues, vnder day ly and light imperfections.

ORDO

ORDO AD VNGENDAM INFIRMAM.

IN *primis pulsetur campana Capituli; & Sorores, quæ possunt, in Ecclesiam conueniant, quibus congregatis, & Sacerdote cum Ministris præparatis: Sacerdos accipiat oleum sanctum. Deinde ordinate procedant cum psalmo* Miserere mei Deus. *Cum autem peruentum fuerit ad locum vbi iacet infirma, Sacerdos dicat.* Pax huic domui. ℟. Et omnibus habitantibus in ea. *Stans ante ægrotam dicat.* ℣. Adiutorium nostrum *&c.* ℟. Qui fecit cælum *&c.* ℣. Dominus vobiscum *&c.*

Oremus.

INtroeat Domine Iesu Christe domum hanc, sub nostræ humilitatis ingressu, æterna fœlicitas, diuina prosperitas, serena lætitia, charitas fructuosa, sanitas sempiterna. Effugiat ex hoc loco accessus dæmonum, adsint Angeli pacis:

cis: domumque hanc deſerat effugata diſcordia. Magnifica Domine ſuper nos nomen ſanctum tuum, & † benedic noſtræ conuerſationi, ſanctifica † noſtræ humilitatis ingreſſum, qui ſanctus & pius es: & permanes cum Patre & ſpiritu ſancto in ſæcula ſæculorum. Amen.

OReмus & deprecemur Dominum noſtrũ Ieſum Chriſtum, vt benedicendo benedicat † hoc tabernaculum, & omnes habitantes in eo: & det eis Angelum bonum cuſtodem: faciat eas ſibi ſeruire ad conſiderandum mirabilia de lege ſua, auertat ab eis omnes contrarias poteſtates: eripiat eas ab omni formidine, & ab omni perturbatione, ac ſanas in hoc tabernaculo cuſtodire dignetur. Qui cum Patre.

EXaudi nos Domine ſancte Pater omnipotẽs ęterne Deus

&

& mittere digneris ſanctum Angelum tuum de cœlis: qui cuſtodiat, foueat, protegat, viſitet atque defendat omnes habitantes in hoc tabernaculo. Per Dominum noſtrum Ieſum Chriſtum filium tuũ. Qui tecũ viuit & regnat. &c.

Deinde in modum crucis aſpergat ægrotam aqua benedicta: poſtea domum dicendo.

Aſperges me Domine hyſſopo &c. *cum verſu more ſolito deinde ægrota dicat* Confiteor. *Quo dicto omnes Sacerdotes aſtantes inſimul eam abſolvant. Poſtea Sorores legant 7. pſalmos cum Litanijs. Interim Sacerdos, intincto police in oleo ſancto dicat abſolutè.*

IN nomine Patris, & Filij, & Spiritus ſancti extinguatur, in te omnis virtus diaboli per impoſitionem manuum noſtrarum, immo per inuocationem omnium ſanctorum, Angelorum, & Archangelorum

changelorum, Patriarcharũ Prophetarum, Apoſtolorum, Martyrum, Confeſſorum, Virginum, atque omnium ſimul ſanctorum. Amen.

Quo dicto faciat ſignum crucis de oleo ſancto in corpore ægræ in ſex locis infra ſcriptis, ad vnamquamque crucem, propriam orationem dicendo.

Ad oculos.

PEr iſtam ſanctam vnctionem † & ſuam pijſſimam miſericordiam parcat tibi Dominus quicquid oculorum vitio deliquiſti. ℟. Amen.

Miniſter vero tergat locum intinctum & inunctum, cum ſtupa, reponens eam in vaſe mundo: & ſic faciat poſt quamlibet vnctionem.

Ad aures.

Per iſtam ſanctam vnctionem † & ſuam pijſſimam miſericordiam parcat tibi Dominus quicquid

quid auriũ vitio deliquisti. ℟. Amẽ.

Ad Nares. Per istam sanctã vnctionem † & suam pijssimam misericordiam parcat tibi Dominus quicquid narium vitio deliquisti. ℟. Amen.

Ad Os. Per istam sanctam vnctionem † & suam pijssimam misericordiam parcat tibi Dominus quicquid linguæ vel oris vitio deliquisti. ℟. Amen.

Ad Manus. Per istam sanctam vnctionem † & suam pijssimam misericordiam parcat tibi Dominus quicquid tactus vitio deliquisti. ℟. Amen.

Ad Pedes. Per istam sanctam vnctionem † & suam pijssimam misericordiam parcat tibi Dominus quicquid incessus vitio deliquisti. ℟. Amen.

Psal. & Litanijs lectis, Sacerd. dicat.

Kyrie eleyson. Christe eleyson. Kyrie eleyson. Pater noster. &c.

℣. Et ne nos &c. ℟. ſed libera &c. ℣. Saluam fac ancillam tuam. ℟. Deus meus ſperantem in te ℣. Mitte ei Domine auxiliũ de ſancto. ℟. Et de Sion tuere eam. ℣. Eſto ei Domine turris fortitudinis. ℟. A facie inimici. ℣. Nihil proficiat inimicus in ea. ℟. Et filius iniquitatis non apponat nocere ei. ℣. Domine exaudi. &c. Dominus vobiſcum. &c.

Oremus.

DOmine Deus, qui per Apoſtolum tuum locutus es, dum infirmatur quis in vobis, inducat Presbyteros Eccleſiæ, & orent ſuper eum, vngentes eum oleo ſancto in nomine Domini: & oratio Fidei ſaluabit infirmum, & alleuiabit eum Dominus, & ſi in peccatis ſit, dimittentur ei: cura quæſumus domine redemptor noſter gratia Spiritus ſancti languores iſtius infirmæ, & ſua ſana vulnera,

nera, eiuſque dimitte peccata, atque dolores cunctos cordis & corporis ab ea expelle, plenamque ei interius exteriuſque ſanitatem miſericorditer redde: vt ope miſericordiæ tuæ reſtituta ad priſtina reparetur officia. Qui cum patre & eodem Spiritu ſancto viuis & regnas.

REſpice quæſumus domine famulam tuam N. in infirmitate ſui corporis fatiſcentem, & animam refoue, quam creaſti: vt pijs caſtigationibus emendata, ſentiat ſe tua medicina ſaluatam. Per Chriſtum Dominum noſtrum. ℟. Amen.

DOmine ſancte pater omnipotens æterne Deus, qui benedictionis tuæ gratiam ægris infundendo corporibus facturam tuam multiplici pietate cuſtodis, ad inuocationem nominis tui benignus aſſiſte vt famulam tuam

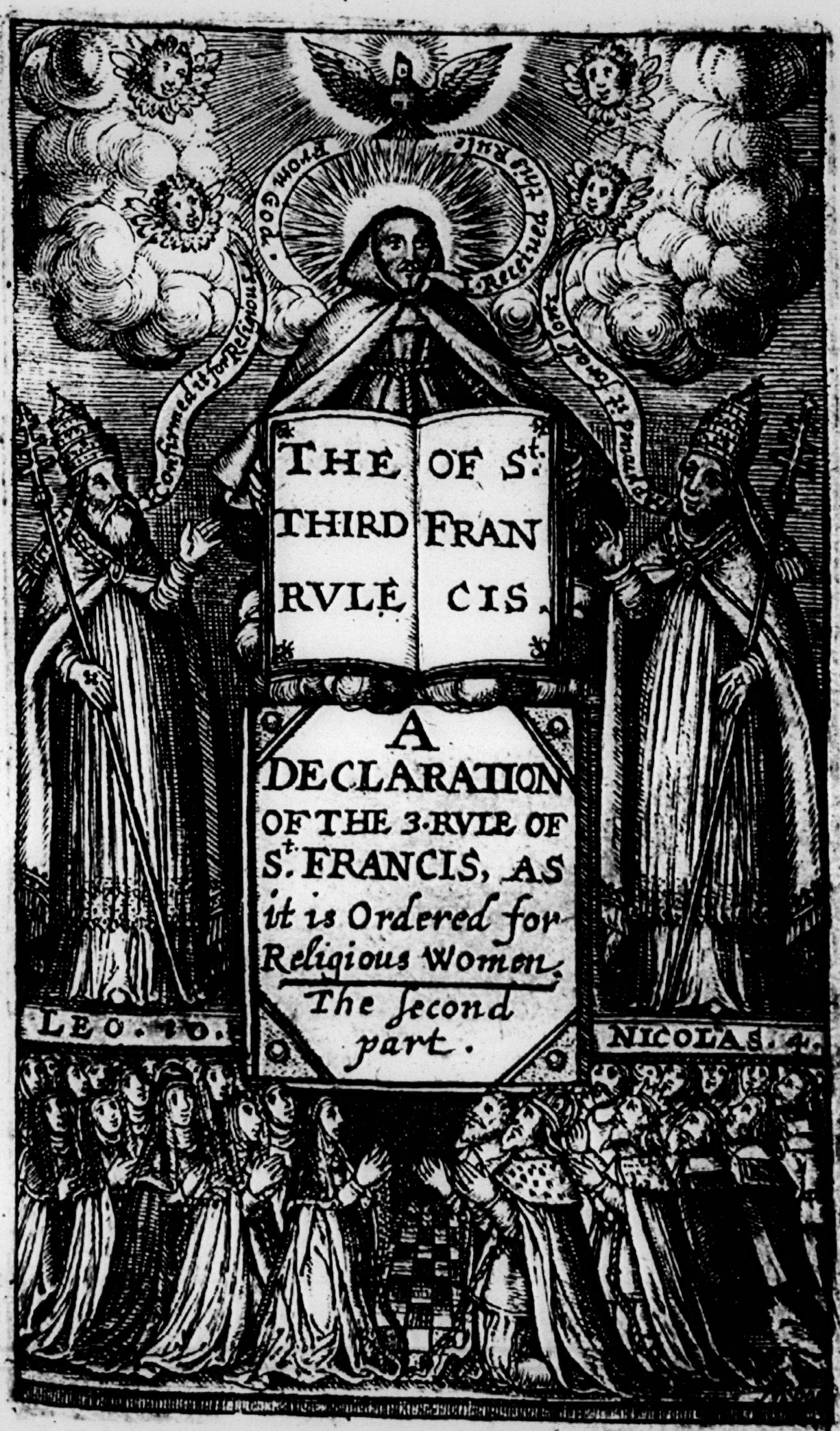
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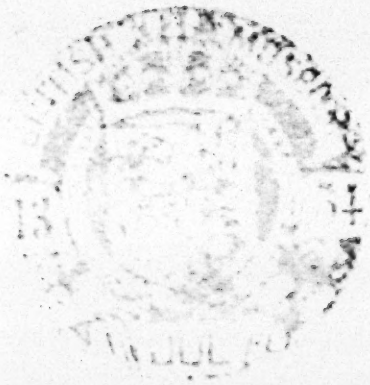
N. ab ægritudine liberatam, & sanitati donatam: dextera erigas, & virtute confirmes, potestate tuearis, atque Ecclesiæ tuæ, sanctisque altaribus tuis cum omni desiderata prosperitate restituas. Per Christum Dominum nostrum ℟. Amen.

DOminus Iesus Christus, apud te sit, vt te reficiat, circa te sit, vt te conseruet, ante te sit, vt te deducat, post te sit, vt te custodiat, super te sit, vt te † benedicat. Qui in Trinitate perfecta viuit & regnat in sæcula sæculorum. ℟. Amen.

Post hæc stupam proijciet in ignem His peractis, eo ordine quo venerunt simul in Ecclesiam reuertantur, excepto quòd crux remaneat coram infirma.

FINIS.


Confirmed it for Religious Women
From God
Received this Rule
Confirmed it for Religious Men
THE THIRD RVLE OF S.t FRANCIS.
A DECLARATION OF THE 3. RVLE OF S.t FRANCIS, AS it is Ordered for Religious Women.
The second part.
LEO. 10.
NICOLAS. 4.



THE RVLE
OF PENANCE
OF THE
SERAPHICALL FATHER
S. FRANCIS.

Approued and confirmed by Leo the X. for Religious Persons of the 3. Order of S. Francis.

Together with a Declaration of each point of the Rule, profitable not only to the Religious of this Order, but also to all Religious Women.

By Br ANGELVS FRANCIS
Friar Minour.

THE SECOND PART.

AT DOVAY,
By the Widdow of MARKE VVYON.
M. D C. X L I V.



TO THE VENERABLE

MOTHER ABBESSE, AND RELIGIOVS SISTERS OF THE THIRD ORDER OF S. FRANCIS,

In the Monasterie of S. Elizabeth at Nieuport: all health and happinesse.



OVR *gratefull acceptance of my poore labours, hath challenged so much interest*

in me, that I canne neither be wanting to your pious desires, nor refuse any labour, that may be for your spirituall good or advancement; especially when my Superiours shall second your desires, byt' eir commands; as in this they haue done; for although they could not but consider, that such a taske might be a hindrance to such imployments as Obedience had enioyned me; yet it pleased them to condiscend to your iust and reasonable request;

request; being moved ther-
to by your prompt Obe-
dience, religious pietie, and
charitable concord, which
might deserue all charitable
favour, all paternall loue,
and pastorall care, to che-
rish, maintaine, and con-
serue the exact and per-
fect observance of your ho-
ly Rule and Profession.
Which (without odious cõ-
parisons to other Rules or
States) as it is now orde-
red, and setled, aswell by
the severall ordinations of

the Popes, who haue in a speciall manner, endeavoured to innoble and dignifie this state of life; as also by the diligent care of Superiours, who haue continually laboured to draw this third Order, to a greater perfection, by particular statutes, which they haue made to that end: is now brought to that height, that by the obseruance of your Profession, you may attaine to the highest degree of perfection. To the furtherance

wherof,

wherof, I according to the charge that hath bene given me, haue attempted to lay open before your eies, the true ſenſe and meaning of your holy Rule; that by often reading, and continually propoſing it before your eies, yee may the more promptly, and more ſpiritually obſerve it. If it happen that I haue not pleaſed or ſatisfied each ones guſt; yet it cannot be ſaid, but that I haue aimed at the marke, if any other will

doe it better, I will giue place to him; and content my ſelfe with this; that if my abilitie in this kind (ſome what leſſened by multiplicitie of imployments) had bene greater, it would not haue any way equaliſed my deſire to aſſiſt and helpe your holy communitie, which for God I honour and reſpect, as I doe all other religious Orders who perhaps may make ſome vſe of this worke.

I haue bene moved to

this,

this, for two reasons: the first is, out of the respect I beare to your first Founder, who as he hath bene the first restorer and Provinciall of our newly restored Prouince of Frier Minors, so he hath bene my first father, for by his meanes although vnworthy I became a member of that seraphicall Order, and therfore as a gratfull child, I cannot but second to my power, what he hath so piously prudently and wonderfully be-

gunne; Piously (I ſay) becauſe in this he hath shewen himſelfe a true child of our ſeraphicall Father who deſirous of the ſaluation of the whole world, did begin three Orders, the one for Religious men, the other for religious women, and the third for all ſorts of people; as is declared in the firſt part; this R. Father following his example, after having liued many yeares in the Miſsion of England; by divine inſpiration became a

child

child of that ſeraphicall Father; and not contented with his owne felicitie he ſought to bring others after him, to the end that he might reſtore that Province of Friar Minors, which had bene ſo famous in former times in our kingdome: which he happily brought to paſſe, and not long after ſeeing that the poore Clares by Gods providence had already bene eſtabliſhed: he determined alſo to renew the third Order, aſwell amongſt

amongſt thoſe who liue in the world, as with thoſe who by their ſolemne vowes are truly Religious; which he hath done prudently conſidering the tender diſpoſition and delicate nature of our English nation, he hath mitigated the exteriour rigour, which ſome other Orders, eſpecially the poore Clares doe practiſe, and augmented the interiour; as in the Quire, mẽtall prayer, and ſucn like; wherein I may ſay they are inferiour

to

to none; to this we may adde, that he hath done it wonderfully, for by his sole labour, and industry: he he hath erected two Monasteries; and in this may be said to be second, to none of these our times.

The other is your owne vertue, pietie, and devotion, which are more than sufficient allurements to any well disposed mind; I must here forbeare to expresse my judgement of these, least I might seeme to flatter

yee,

yee, or manifeſt my fond-ſeeming affection; I will only ſay, envy it ſelfe cannot ſtaine your vertue, which shines in your humilitie, ſimplicitie, peaceſull vnion, charitable ſocietie, and zealous emulation to the perfect obſervance of your Profeſsion. And for my owne part I haue admired your pietie, in the true Obedience, and Reverence of your Superiours: your Charitie and mutuall reſpect to each other: all

which

which are certaine meanes to make yee happy, and as long as yee continue in them so long shall yee be pleasing to God, delightfull to your Superiours; and in credit before the whole world. Your devotion also hath often raised my dull spirits, to haue a feeling of celestiall things; when I haue seene your alacritie in praysing God, by singing and saying night and day the divine Office; & your fervour in often communicating,

cating, & desire of heauenly conuersation: if I haue noted any defects, they haue bene such as humaine frailtie carries with it: most commonly, in excesses of this kind; which in Religion may be termed pious faults and as I haue blamed them in yee, so with my selfe I haue praised God, who hath inspired those, whose sex is esteemed the weakest, to equall if not surpasse the strongest; making them to aspire

pire ſtill to the greater aſcent in perfection; & with contempt of their weakeneſſe, and tenderneſſe of nature, to aſcend the ſteepe mountaine of vertue and pietie; perhaps to this end, the divine providence hath diſpoſed, that yee ſhould be placed in the ſame towne, with thoſe holy ſervants of God, the Carthuſian Fathers, true Patternes of perfection and the glorie of our Nation, againſt whom the raging enemie could

not

not prevaile; and whose continuall ſucceſsiõ in their happy ſtate, even to theſe times; envious hereſie could not extinguish: that by their example, yee might aime at the higheſt degree of perfection; and both mutually excite each other to praiſe the divine Majeſtie.

Now as the former conſideration hath moved me, to dedicate the firſt Part of this Worke, to your Father and Founder: ſo the latter hath enforced me, to preſent

ſent this part, to you all as a new-yeares-guift; that as the new yeare puts vs in minde, of the newneſſe of life, we ought to embrace: ſo with new fervour of ſpirit yee may goe forward in the obſervance of your holy Profeſsion; & God wilbe your eternall reward, for which I dayly pray remaining alwayes.

Yours in Chriſt
Ieſus

B. ANGELVS FRANCIS.

TO THE READER.

ALTHOVGH I haue bene formerly vrged to haue performed this worke, and could not be induced to conceiue it, to be any way conuenient: becauſe true Religious ſimplicitie is the greateſt ornament of conſecrated virgins: yet finding by experience, that the want of the true vnderſtanding of their Rule, and ſtate, is an occaſion of many errors in both extreames, wherto the femall ſex ordinarily is more ſubiect; it hath

bene

bene thought conuenient, that ſome declaration should be made of their Rule, that with more ſecuritie and better iudgement, they might obſerue it; for who knowes not the manifold difficulties, there are in receiving of Novices, in giving ſuffrages for their Profeſſion, in making elections, viſits, or ſuch like: wherein few Religious women are experienced; and not hauing bookes in our English language, to this effect as all other Nations haue in their ſeverall languages; doe many times proceed according to their affection, rather than

than by discretion: and who is ignorant of the manifold scruples, and doubts, that they haue, concerning their office, vowes, and obligation; whereby they become troublesome to their Confessours, and distract and hinder themselues from other better imployments: wherfore in this worke, I haue endeavoured to helpe them, both in the one and the other; according to the occasions, that haue bene administred vnto me, in the Rule: wherein if perhaps I haue gone any thing farther, than the ordinary way; I meane concerning

the

the Resolution of some cases of conscience the Reader wilbe pleased to consider, that I intended not this worke for the learned; who in the Casuists may find these, and more for their satisfaction: but for women; whose obligation is not so great, and apprehension of their obligation for the most part, greater; whose excesse in devotion is more frequent, rather apprehending obligation where they haue none than by wilfull deliberation omitting the least thing they conceiue to haue an obligation: Whose devotion is rather superstitious,

than ſacrilegious : which makes me alwayes of opinion, that this devout ſex, should be rather ledde by the rules of loue, and pietie: than by the bonds of ſtrictneſſe and feare : & this hath made me to proceed with them, in the mildeſt way, making vſe alwayes of the authoritie of claſſicall authors ; which although I haue not cited, becauſe the worke is for women : I can eaſily produce : and here I doe affirme, that I haue not ſet downe any thing but what I haue ſufficient authoritie for ; alwayes ſubmitting this and what ſoe-

ver that I shall doe, to the iudgements of the learned.

I hope the pious Reader will pardon some litterall faults which haue passed in the print: since the Printers are strangers and ignorant of our language, the principall I haue marked pag. 47. l. 20. read to the 5. for to the 4. pag. 69. l. 18. badge, for bag. p. 73. l. 20 only for roly. pag. 90. l. 4. in violating for inviolating. pag. 98. l. 11. priuately for tacitely. p. 108. l. 20. canon for common. p. 122. l. 17. vower for vowes. p. 311. l. 9. are for or. 402. l. 19. to, for, by p. 415. l. 1. that at least. for that least.

APPROBATION.

LIber hic ab admodum R. P. F. Angelo à S. Franciſco, S. Theologiæ Lectore, & Recollectorum Ordinis eiuſdem Sancti Prouinciæ Anglicanæ Commiſſario compoſitus: cui titulus eſt *A Declaratiõ of the third Rule of S. Francis approved and confirmed by Pope Leo the X. for Religious.* Sancti monialium puſillanimium Conſolatio merito vocari deberet: eſt enim quaſi commentarius in Regulam tertij Ordinis Religioſis adaptatam, ad fæmineam Crudelitatem vel ignorantiam, conſcientiasque erroneas, & Confeſſariorum ſcrupuloſitatem curandam; cuius ſi Religionem ſpectes; pietate plenus eſt: ſi doctrinam, omnifariæ ſcientiæ Moralis partu grauidus: nihil ſane habens contra fidem vel bonos mores, ſed multa præclara ex viris pijs & doctis collecta; quæ à præfatis Sanctimonialibus 3. Ordinis ſine formidine practicari poſſunt. Datum Duaci in Collegio S. Gregorij Magni Benedictinorum Anglorum 8. Ian. An. Dom. 1644.

F. RVDESINDVS BARLO
S. Theologiæ Doctor ac Profeſſor in Collegio Vedaſtino Duaceno.

A P-

APPROBATION.

PErlegi Commentarium R. admodum Patris Fratris Angeli à S. Franciſco S. T. Lectoris & Recollectorum Prouinciæ Anglicanæ Commiſſarij, in 3. regulam S. Franciſci, ſub hoc titulo, *A Declaration of the 3. Rule of S. Francis* &c. In quo nihil deprehendi à fide Catholica vel bonis moribus alienum, ſed multa præclara documenta quæ ad pietatem promouendam & diſciplinæ regularis obſeruantiam ſtabiliendam, & non ſolum ad conſolationem Religioſarum, ſed etiam ad inſtructionem Confeſſariorum plurimum poſſint conducere. Ita ſaluo meliori iudicio, ſentio die 8. Ian. 1644.

GVILIELMVS HYDÆVS
S. T. Profeſſor & Collegij Anglo-Duaceni Vicepræſes.

APPROBATION.

VIsis istis Approbationibus licentiam do vt typis mandetur in maiorem gloriam D. O. M. & B. Virginis, ac Sanctissimi P. N. Francisci.

F. GEORGIVS A S. GVLIELMO *FF. MM. Prouinciæ Angliæ Minister.*

HÆc Declaratio Regulæ 3. S. Francisci, vt mihi constitit testimonio duorum S. T. Lectorum, Anglicanæ linguæ peritorum, pia est & Catholica. Quapropter vtiliter excudi poterit. Datum Duaci die 9. Ian. 1644.

GEORGIVS COLVENERIVS *S. T. Doctor, & regius ordinariusque Professor, Collegiatæ Ecclesiæ S. Petri Præpositus, Duacensis Academiæ Cancel. & Librorum Censor.*

The

The Rule of Penance of the holy Father S. Francis, as it is confirmed and approued by Pope Leo the X. for Religious Persons of the third Order.

THE PREFACE.



LEO the X. ſervant of the ſervants of God, to our welbeloved childrē the Friers and Nunnes of the third Order of S. Francis, living in congregation, vnder the obſervance of the three eſsētiall vowes, health and Apoſtolicall Benediction.

Amongſt other things which concerne & belong

to

to our Paſtorall ſtate, and are committed vnder our charge, and govuernement; there is nothing that makes vs more carefull, than this, that by ſome meanes, the peacefull ſtate of Innocency, and firſt peace granted and ſent from heaven, may be reſtored vnto its former ſpring and origine: the worldly and carnall concupiſcences be broken, and brought to nothing. To this end, ſome times paſt, Pope Nicholas the IV. our Predeceſſour, hath confirmed and approved this third Rule of our Father S. Francis, ſtiled the Rule of Penance, whe-

whereby the holy Confeſſour of Ieſus Chriſt, full of the holy Ghoſt, did endeavour and labour to ſaue all faithfull Chriſtians of both ſexes. But becauſe that by ſucceſſion of time, the holy Ghoſt ſpreading forth the ſweetneſſe of his loue, vpon the hearts of men, many not only married people, & inhabitants of this world (for whoſe ſake this Rule was brought to light by the Seraphicall Father S. Francis) but alſo Quires of innumerable virgins haue by our authoritie, ſubmitted themſelues to the yoake of the three eſſentiall vowes

in

in this third Order: as in like manner some haue done to to the strict austeritie of perpetuall Enclosure, to this end causing many Monasteries to be builded, (not without great fruict & good exãple through the whole militante Church) and becausé that in this third Rule there were many things convenient for married people put in it, but not so decent to the Religious and Virginall estate, of those who serue God vnder this third Rule, in such sort that somes times the holy desires of chast & pure soules, were with drawen and

made

made cold to enter into this Order and Religion: we by Gods grace desiring to separate the vile and abiect, from the beautifull and pretious, doe anew confirme and approve this third Rule, as it is so separated: and send it to you and your Successours to be kept, and observed. The tenour whereof followeth.

EXPOSITION.

1. IN *this Preface to the Rule The Popes holynesse gives a generall reason of his pastorall care to all Religious Orders: and particularly to these of this third Order.*

2. *He makes a declaration that this Rule of Pennance was first made*

by

by our holy Father. S. Francis and afterward approued by Nicholas the IV. for all sorts of people.

3. *He giues two reasons for which he had abbreuiated this Rule.* 1. *Because there were many things in the Rule which were not fitting for Religious, but rather for such who liue in the world.* 2. *Because by reason of some things contayned in the Rule many were diuerted & withdrawen from Religion: to further the one, and auoid the other, he hath approued this Rule in the Councel of Lateran.*

I forbeare here to speake any more, because I haue done it more at large in the first Part, where the deuout Reader may find full satisfaction.



HERE

HERE BEGINNETH

THE RVLE OF THE THIRD ORDER OF S. FRANCIS,

Accommodated for Religious Persons.

CHAP. I.

Of the conditions of those that are to be receiued.

THE Brothers or Sisters, that are to be receiued to this Order; ought to be faithfull

Catholiques, not tyed in matrimony, free from debts, sound in body, prompt in minde, not touched with any publicke infamie, reconciled to their neighbours; and before their admittance they are to be diligently examined of these things, by those that have power to receive them.

EXPOSITION.

IN this Chapter are briefly set downe many conditions required of those that desire to professe this Rule.

1. *That they be true Catholickes, firmely confessing and professing the faith of Christ Iesus, in obedience to his holy Church.*

2. That they be not married, which is to be vnderstood of consummate matrimony.

3. That they be not in any great debt, whereby they are obliged to make restitution.

4. That they haue abilitie of body to vndergoe the burden or rigour of the Rule and Profession.

5. That they haue a promptitude of minde, to obserue the forme and manner of liuing, according to the prescript of the Rule.

6. That they be not touched with any infamie or publick scandall.

7. That in case they haue any enmitie, rancour, or malice against any one, or haue done any notable iniurie, offence, or wrong to any one; they be fully reconciled vnto them.

8. They are to be examined of all these, by the Superiours that haue authoritie to receiue them.

QVESTION I.

Whether those who come to this Order, are to be examined concercerning their faith?

FAith being as the holy Counsell of Trent hath defined, sess. 6. de reform. cap. 8. *Humanæ salutis initium, fundamentum & radix omnis iustificationis.* The beginning, foundation, and roote of all iustification, without which it is *impossible to please God*, Heb. 11. or to come to the company of his children: which taken away all the workes and labours of men are vaine and vnprofitable; it is no wonder that the holy Father *S. Francis*, (whom Pope *Gregorie* the 9. calles Seraphicall Catholycke and Apostolike) should be so

ſo carefull to make choiſe of ſuch as should come to embrace this Rule, well knowing that to themſelves, it was no way profitable, to the Communities dangerous, and many times ſcandalous to the place and order.

Wherfore although that by divine and eccleſiaſticail law, this condition is neceſſarie, witneſſe S. Iohn the Euangeliſt epiſt. 2. *If any man come to you, and bring not this doctrine* (that is the faith of Chriſt Ieſus and his Church) *receive him not into the houſe, nor ſay God ſave you; unto him. S. Irenæus* as Euſeb l. 4. Hiſt. c. 13. declares, ſaith, that the Apoſtles, & their diſciples, had ſo much feare of heretiques; that they would not even by word of mouth communicate with any of them, that had adulterated the truth. Great *S. Antony* the Hermite did com-

mand his disciples, that they should avoid the poyson of Heretickes and Schismatickes, and that they should follow his exãple, for that they knew, he neuer had any peaceable speech with them; for as the Apostle saith 2. Tim. 2. *Their speech spreadeth as a canker. or gangrene*, that is as the disease called canker or gangrene by little and little spreads abroade and infecteth al the other members; so the canker, pest, and leprosie of heresie disperseth it selfe, & infecteth families, townes, & countries. Whence the wise man saith Eccli. 13. *He that toucheth pitch shalbe defiled with it, and he that communicateth with the proud, shall put on pride.* and S. Paule 1. Cor. 5. *I now write to you, not to keepe Company, if he that is named a Brother be a fornicatour, or a couetous person. or*

a ser-

a ſeruer of Idols, or a railer, or a drunkarde, or an extorſioner: with ſuch an one not ſo much as to take meate: much leſſe with heretikes. againſt whom alſo the Church hath very ſtrict lawes; and in this ſenſe it ſeemes a law to all Chriſtians.

Our holy Father in all his 3. Rules; doth not only require this of them, to wit that they be not Hereticks, but alſo that they be faithfull Catholikes: that is; they muſt haue a right & firme beliefe: and alwayes profeſſe the Catholicke and Romane faith.

Moreouer they muſt haue no ſuſpition of Hereſie; for in caſe that there may be any iuſt ſuſpition of their not being catholique; by reaſon of Parentage, ſome ſcandall giuen, relapſe, or ſuch like, they ſhould not be re-

ceiued, vntill the matter were cleared. Briefly the Seraphicall Doctor *S. Bonaventure*, expounding this point in the first Rule; saith, that in the examination of the catholique faith, is vnderstood the examinatiõ of all things that belong to matters of faith: for: saith he, the manner of the Rule, is to giue to vnderstand like things, by their like, and to implie the lesser in the greater. Whence we may gather; that not only infidels, Hereticks, and schismatikes, but also all persons suspected of Heresie, infidelitie, or the like, are not to be admitted into this order; and if it chance that such be admitted, their profession is invalide; and of no force.

Moreouer by this condition are excluded all such as descend with in the 4. degree from Iewes:

Infidels,

Infidels, or heretickes, that haue bene actually condemned for Heresy, although that vpon iust reasons, and grounds; they may be admitted: howsoeuer great care is to be had herein, for the children many times are inclined to follow the steps of their parents.

QVEST. II.

Whether married People may be admitted into this order?

THis Question is answered in two propositions: the first is. All diuines agree that no married person after consummate matrimony, is capable to vndertake any state of Religiõ. Which is grounded upon the words of S. Paule 1. Cor. 7. *The woman hath not power of her owne body,*

but her husband: and the man hath not power of his owne body, but the woman: so that they have not any dominion or power over their owne bodies; and consequently cannot give themselues to Religion, and if it chance that they doe; their profession is invalide and of no force; and they may be compelled to returne againe, except in these cases following.

1. When they are lawfully diuorced, they may freely enter to Religion, for allthough that the bond of Marriage remaines, yet they are freed from the obligation of Marriage, to dwell and remaine together: and consequently expressely or tacitely, they give consent to each other, to doe what seemes best unto them: remitting each others power over the other.

2. When

2. When through mutuall consent both parties enter into Religion, wherein there is the same reason as above.

3. When the one partie gives consent to the other, permitting them to undertake that course of life. But hereto are required 3. conditions 1. that the party remaining in the world doth make a vow of continency in Ex. *cum sis uxoratus*. 2. that the partie remaining be of such age that there may be no iust suspition of their incontinencie. c. ad Apostolicam de conuers. coniug. 3. that this vow of continency be made before the Bishop. can. si uir & uxor: 27. q. 2. yet some hold this last as a precept, and not of necessitie in it selfe.

Secondly it is certaine that married people, before their matrimonie be consummate may law-

fully enter into Religion, yea without the consent of the other party; which is defined in the Councell of Trent sess. 24. de mat. can. 26. and Iohn 22. in his Extra. de voto, Hath declared the same. Which hath much more ground in Espousals: for the parties betrothed may lawfully breake off, and enter into Religion. As Pope *Eusebius* about the yeare 309. cited by Gratian 26. q. c. *Desponsatum* teacheth, in these words. *Although it be not lawfull for the parents to give their daughters espoused, to any other man, yet is lawfull for her, if she will, to choose a monastery.*

But some may aske whether it be so also in case that these espousalls were made by an oath? Whereto I answere, with *Pontius* l. 12. c. 8. §. 3. *de matrimonio* & others: that it doth not hinder

hinder the entrance into Religion; for the oath is changed into a better thing. and c. *peruurans* 2. *de iure iurando.* It is said that he who changeth an oath into a better thing is no periurer; neither is he said to breake his vow, that changeth his vow in to a greater: Now it is certaine that to enter into Religion is of greater perfection than to marry, and therfore such may lawfully be admitted.

QVEST. III.

Whether those that are in debt may be admitted vnto Religion?

THis order being a Rule or state of pennance, necessarily requires a perfect amendment of life, and restitution of all things, that are vniustly detained,

ned, before any one can be admitted, they muſt with *Zacchæus* Luc, 19. make reſtitution of other mens goods: for as S. Ambroſe ſaith ſer. 3. in Dom. quad. *He that doth not endeauour to reſtore to his neighbour what he vniuſtly retaines of his, hath no feare of God and is ignorant of what true penance is.* Wherfore with good reaſon Pope Sixtus 5. did ordaine, that thoſe who were in debt, or obliged to great accounts ſhould by no meanes be receiued, vntill they had made all cleare, and giuen full ſatisfaction to their creditors, vnder penalty for the Receiuers: of being depriued of actiue and paſſiue voice. The like may be ſaid. Of thoſe, who haue had ſome office, or charge wherein there haue bene great accounts vnſatisfied; and generally none are to

be admitted with the notable damage or wrong to another; if it lie in their power to helpe it: in ſumme all thoſe that are in any great debt, or are bound to giue accounts, are to make ſuch ſatisfaction as lies in their power, before they enter, Not that this doth annull their profeſſion, but that the Receiuers are ſubiect to punishment as aboue ſaid. Yet from this Generall Rule there are ſome exceptions.

1. Thoſe that haue debts of no great value, importing no great damage to the creditors; for in ſuch caſe they are not bound to omitt ſo great a ſpirituall good; although it were better that they did pay it, if it may be done without their ſpirituall hindrance.

2. Thoſe that haue vncertaine debts, as not knowing the certaine

taine perſon to whom they are to be paid, may ſatisfie their debts by giuing almes to the poore or by leauing them to Religious monaſteries.

3. Thoſe who are not able to pay their debts, nor haue any certaine hopes to pay them; by giuing what they haue to the Creditors, are excuſed, & may ſecurely be admitted.

4. Thoſe who are voluntarie debtors, that is who haue made promiſes to doe or giue this or that, may notwithſtanding ſuch promiſes enter into Religion, for thereby they change their promiſes or vowes to that which is better.

5. Thoſe debtors who by conſent of their Creditors come to Religion, may be lawfully admitted; for in ſo doing they are freed from al obligation. Laſtly

when

when the Monasterie or some other doth vndertake the payement of their debts.

Superiours ought to take great care in the admission of any such, least others should receiue iniury aud wrong thereby; and the Religious be troubled with clamors of creditours many times not without scandal.

QVEST. IV.

What Abilitie of Body and Minde is required in those that are to be admitted?

FIrst it is certaine, that although children may be admitted into monasteries, with due circumstances, to be taught and instructed: yet they cannot take a religious habit, before they be twelue yeares old; for so it is defined

ſined by the counſell of Trent. *ſeſſ.25.c.17.de regul.* and the Congregation of Cardinals doth ſtrictly forbid all diſpenſations in this kind. And if ſuch of their owne accord will goe to religiõ, neither Parents, nor tutors, nor any other, haue power to hinder them vnder paine of excommunication by the ſame Councell of Trent. cap. ſeq.

Secondly thoſe who want the vſe of reaſon, are not to be admitted, for that they are not capable to iudge of their ſtate, to this alſo may be reduced the Dumbe, blinde & deafe, who are not eaſily to be admitted, vnleſſe ſome other guiſte of nature, or minde may ſupply the defect.

3. Thoſe who are troubled with any infectious diſeaſe, and being demanded doe conceale it, doe not only ſinne mortally, but

alſo doe incurre the danger of making their profeſſion invalide and of no force; becauſe Profeſſion in a Religious ſtate, is a contract which requires a mutuall conſent of both parties; now in ſuch caſe it ſeemes that the conſent of the Superiours was wanting in that if they had knowne ſuch defect, ſo preiudiciall to their ſtate, they would not haue admitted ſuch a one.

4. Sickneſſe or weakeneſſe of body are no neceſſary impediments, but they may be admitted, and triall made of them; vnleſſe it be ſome continuall ſickneſſe, that makes them altogether vncapable of a religious life. What is to be done in ſuch caſes, ſhalbe declared in the next chapter: only Here it is required that ſuch who are admitted be able to vndergoe the rigour of the Rule:

howſo-

howſoeuer, Gods grace is not limited to the diſpoſition of the body. Many times a ſtrong ſoule is couched vnder a weake body.

Moreouer the Rule requires, that thoſe who come to this courſe of life, should haue a prõpt and willing minde, by diuine inſpiration, not out of leuitie or impetuoſitie of minde, or with any coaction, force, feare, or humaine reſpect; but out of a true, ſinceare, and hearty deuotion, purely for the loue of Gods, intending by his grace to vndergoe the auſteritie, and rigour of their Profeſſion; thoſe that come other wiſe are not to be receiued.

Where we may note, that if any one doe directly compell by force, or feare (which may moue a conſtant minde) any virgin, or woman to enter into Religion they cannot be excuſed frõ ſinne,

and

and are excommunicated by the fore ſaid Counſell of Trent in the place aboue cited; and not only they, but alſo all thoſe, who giue Counſell, aide or fauour therto, and all thoſe that ſhall interpoſe their preſence, counſell or auctoritie, to their receiuing of the habit, or making their profeſſion. And the reaſon is, becauſe the entry into Religion ought to be free, and at their owne choiſe, both for ſtate and qualitie of ſtate. And therfore in ſuch caſe, the law doth declare the reception and profeſſion of ſuch, invalide, and of no force. Vnleſſe in caſe that the Iudge who hath power ouer the guiltie parties life, doe giue him or her their choiſe of death or entry into Religion, this being a iuſt feare doth not vitiate the act. But that their profeſſion ſo

made

made is lawfulland good. The like may be ſaid of Parents, whoſe rigour many times doth cauſe their children to take ſome religious courſe, which being not done directly to that end, and proceeding from their owne election, is ſufficient.

QVEST. V.

What infamie doth hinder entrance into Religion?

WIth great reaſon, our Seraphicall Father did exclude infamous perſons from this order; for although that the profeſſours therof, are and haue bene of good eſteeme, reuerence, and fame, yet if they ſhould admit any ſuch they might looſe their credit and eſteeme with the world; and alſo endanger the whole

whole body or parts therof. Now in this clauſe are comprehended two ſorts of infamous perſons to wit ſuch as by the law are iudged ſo; & ſuch who are eſteemed ſo by the vulgar.

The law eſteemes ſuch to be infamous that are noted with any publicke and ſcandalous crimes; as vſury, adultery, inceſt, witchcraft, murder, periurie and ſuch like: who as they are not eaſily admitted to take holy orders, ſo are not they without ſome iuſt motiues, to be admitted vnto Religion; by reaſon of the ſcandall that may ariſe therby.

The Vulgar doe hold ſuch for infamous, as by their manner of life or trade, are diſeſteemed by thoſe of good ranke, or qualitie, ſuch are vile and abiect people, who ordinarily are vitious, and

of

of no honeſt or ciuil life, lewd woemen who proſtrate themſelues to the view or knowledge of the world; men or woemen of certaine trades, and offices, which commonly are eſteemed baſe; as hangmen or their wiues or children, all vagabonds, common Beggars or ſuch that by their lewde courſes are in neceſſitie or want: For ſuch ordinarily rather ſeeke to relieue their wants, than to ſerue God in Religion. Or ſuch as the Apoſtle S. Paule mentions 1. Tim. 3. *Fighters, quarrelers, conetuous perſons, puffed vp in pride, double tongued, Drunkards or* ſuch like. And generally; all ſuch whoſe behauiour hath bene ſuch in the world, that others deſirous of their ſaluation, would be vnwilling to range themſelues in their company. Vnleſſe vpon true repentance,

pentance, and good proofes of their conuersion & amendement: Superiours shall iudge it conuenient to receiue them; for otherwise by the admission of such persons, much hurt and preiudice, besides scandall might happen to Religion. Which to auoid; those who haue authoritie, ought to haue a vigilant care ouer those whom they receiue. Prouiding in as much as they may that (as the Apostle saith in the place before mentioned) *they haue good testimonie of them that are without. That they fall not into reproach and the snare of the Deuill.* Which S. Ambrose expounds thus: *Let him haue a testimonie of his good life, euen frõ the world, least they reproach him with his former vice, and he fall into infamie.* We may say, least that in reproaching him, they reproach religion, and

by his infamie diffame a religious company; & thereby be a meanes to withdraw others from their good purposes and intentions.

QVEST. VI.

Whether those who come to this Order are to reconcile themselues to their neighbours?

OVr Sauiour Christ *Iesus* did commend this Reconciliation, and peace with our neighbours, in the 5. Chap. of S. Matthew saying: *If thou offer thy guift at the altar, and there thou remember, that thy brother hath ought against thee; leaue there thy offering before the altar, and goe first to be reconciled to thy brother; and then comming thou shalt offer thy guift.* In which words our Sauiour did make a law of Iustice & Charitie; whereby

whereby he commanded vs first to satisfie our neighbour, if we haue offended him, by word or deed; before we should offer our guift to God; for this is of our owne accord, and as I may say without any obligation: but that is necessarie and due out of Iustice: *S. Chrisostome* hom. 16. vpon the foresaid place, exclaimeth. *O Admirabilis & ineffabilis amor Dei &c. O admirable and ineffable loue of God, towards men; he doth not esteeme of his honour, vntill charitie be employed towards our neighbour; our lord hath said it, let my honour and seruice be omitted to the end that thy Charitie may be restored to its integritie. The reconciliation of Brethren is a pleasing seruice vnto me.* And op. imperf. sup. Mat. he saith. *We ought to know that as long as the faithfull haue any dissensions or quarrels amongst*

themſelues, that God cannot be their friend: their preſent is not receiued, their prayer is not heard nor any good they can doe, accepted; whēce our holy Father would not admit any one to his order that had not firſt reconciled himſelfe to his neighbour ; at leaſt in heart and affection, when he cannot doe it otherwiſe; which I adde becauſe no man is bound to omit the good of his ſoule; for to goe into farre Countries, or remote places, or with other the like difficulties, to ſeeke this reconciliation; but in ſuch caſe, it is ſufficient that they doe it by writing or by ſome friend; but principally that from their heart they be ſorry for the wrong they haue done them. Which diſpoſition if they haue not, it is to be feared, that they doe not come with that true intention to Religion; as is requiſite

quiſite: for thoſe who come therto ought to haue the loue of God; which cannot ſtand with rancour and malice: and ſurely if Gods grace cannot preuaile with them in this, it is much to be doubted leſt they giue ſome occaſion of diſſenſions, and quarrels, amongſt the Religious, which may worke the ruine of Religion.

There are ſome other Conditions required which I mention not, becauſe they are not neceſſarie to the explication of the Rule, and may be very well reduced to theſe afore mentioned, as that ſlaues, men of ſupreame dignities in the Church; ſuch as haue Father or mother ſo poore that they cannot liue without their helpe, may wel be reduced to that of debt and that of vnlawfully borne, to that of infamie; ſo that with a wonderfull breuitie, in a

few words our holy Father hath set downe that which afterward by seuerall Popes hath bene more amply declared; whereof we will briefely speake in the next question.

QVEST. VII.

Of what they are be examined?

Although this Questiõ may seeme satisfied, from the precedent, yet for the better commoditie of those who doe examine them; I will first set downe what Sixtus 5. an. 1587. Bull *Cum de omnibus.* hath ordayned to this end, and afterward: what more is required by the custome of Religion.

Sixtus 5. hath decreed and ordained, that they be 16. yeares old before they can be admitted to

professe

profeſſe in any Religion.

2. That diligent enquirie be made of their Parents, Country, life paſt, and manners.

3. Whether they haue bene guilty, or ſuſpected of any hainous crimes, as murder, theft, rapine, or ſuch like. And of this information is to be made by men worthy of credit.

4. Whether they be in debt, or are to giue accounts as aboueſaid.

5. Whether they come with a good intention as aboueſaid.

The cuſtome of this Order is to examine them of theſe foilowing. Adding to the former ſome things that by the law may diſannull their Profeſſion. And conſequently are neceſſary to be knowne, leaſt afterwards with ſcandall, they be forced to turne them out. Take them briefly.

1. Whether they be faithfull Catholickes, no may ſuſpected of hereſie.

2. Whether they be ſound of body, and not infected with any contagious diſeaſe.

3. Whether they are not bound in conſummate matrimony.

4. Whether they be prompt and ready to vndergoe the burdens of Religion, which may be explayned vnto them with diſcretion.

5. Whether they were borne in lawfull wedloke.

6. Whether they be free from notable debts, or accounts.

7. Whether they can read, ſing, or what other things they can doe for the ſeruice of Religion.

8. Whether they haue committed any infamous crime.

9. Of what age they are, as

for

whether they be aboue twelue, for their admiſſion, to Religion, and 16. for their Profeſſion.

10. Whether they come by the inſtinct of the holy Ghoſt, and not by any falſe promiſes, where they may examine them of their vocation.

11. Whether their parents be able to liue without them, for if their parents be in neceſſitie, and cannot liue but by their helpe, they are not to be admitted.

Laſtly; becauſe the Counſell of Trent, ſeſſ. 25. c. 3. de Reg. will haue that all monaſteries or houſes of men and women (except the Friar Minors obſeruantines and Capucins) should haue certaine rents and meanes, to liue vpon, and that only ſuch places be erected that can be ſuſtained by their proper rents or accuſtomeed almes; which laſt for wo-

men being not so practicall; Superiours ought to be vigilant that none be admitted without a conuenient summe; sufficiēt for their maintenance; least the communities, ouer burdened with such, sustaine penurie or want. And therfore they may and ought to be examined of this, especially in Monasteries that haue no yearly rents, or lands: for in such case, they may receiue as many as their Rents will maintaine, whether they bring any thing or no: but more they cannot.

QVEST. VIII.

Who is to examine them? And how necessarie it is to doe it?

HItherto we haue seene the care of our Seraphicall Father to conserue and keepe this order

order in all puritie, and ſanctitie of life before God and man. And that although he had his armes ſtretched forth to embrace the whole world; yet he would not that all ſorts of perſons should be admitted, but reſpect to be had to their ſtate and condition: and therfore would haue them to be examined before they be admitted.

And generally ſpeaking thoſe are to examine them, that haue authoritie to receiue them; and thoſe by the Rule are to doe it. Yet as they can and doe often commit the receiuing of them to others; ſo alſo they may commit this examination; now it shalbe declared in the queſtion following who be thoſe that haue authoritie to receiue them.

Beſides this examination, the Immediate Superiours of the

place, where they are to be receiued, and to take the Habit, may and ought together with one or two of the eldeſt Religious, (by them called Diſcreets) examine them againe, and that with good reaſon, for they cannot be to carefull, with diſcretion, in the admittance of any one into Religion; that may afterwards be burthenſome to the Communitie, and perhaps a hindrance to their ſpirituall profit: and by this meanes many times they preuent future euills and avoid much blame and ſhame, which otherwiſe they might incurre by admitting ſome altogether vncapable, by diuine or humaine lawes. And ſo be forced to turne them out with diſgrace, and iniury of both ſides.

Our Seraphicall Doctour q. 1. ſup. Reg. FF. Min. hath theſe golden words. *We deſire all ſhould*

be

be ſaued, but it is not expedient that all should be receiued, becauſe many are the Conditions, qualities, and manners of men or Women. Some are Weake and cannot vndergoe the rigour of the Rule. Some are poore, who perhaps come rather to ſeeke reliefe, than other Wiſe for God. Some are diſſolute in their manners or behauiour, who ſeldome times doe amend their liues paſt, but bearing nothing but the habit of Religion, doe looſe the benefit of their ſtate, nay many times they become burdenſome and troubleſome, if not ſcandalous to their monaſteries: but alas: now a dayes we may ſee the Want hereof, for ſome doe it out of compaſſion, fearing their ſaluation in the World, or great ſufferance that might befall them, or ſuch like. But it is hard to judge whether it be a compaſſion or a paſſion, ſith many times it giues occaſion of great

great affliction, to a communitie, & causeth much hurt to Religion. Others are taken for their singular parts and qualities esteemed in the World, in Religion perhaps vnprofitable, and to themselues pernicious. Others are taken by the instãt prayer of friends of the World, and not of God, or Religion; some difformitie, some dishonour, or disgrace comming vpon them, then their Friends labour to get them to Religion, and so giue God the worser part. Which is not said, but that poore or rich, noble or ignoble, learned or vnlearned beautifull or deformed, may and haue often times obtained great perfection in Religion; Gods grace being not tyed more to one than to the other. If they seeke God truelie, one is as pleasing to him as the other. Wherfore I will end with the words of Pope Nicholas the 3. *let them* (to

wit

wit Superiours) *proceede discreetly, not indifferently admitting all to the Order. But only those who by their aptnesse, and other circumstances, may be profitable to the order, meritorious to themselues, and examplar to others.*

QVEST. IX.

Who haue power to receiue any to this Order?

IN the beginning of this Order, our holy Father himselfe did giue the habit, to such as came to embrace this course of life, and sometimes, did giue leaue to others euen of this Order, to admit others; as he did to B. Bartholomew Cumane a very famous lawier one of the first fruicts of this order; who receiued this Rule, as it was for seculars, from S. *Francis.*

Francis. Not long after the order encreasing, the authoritie remained in the hands of the Ministers superintendents, or visitors of the same order.

But in the yeare 1246. some 25. yeares after the beginning of this order; Pope *Innocent the* 4. did wholy submit the gouernement and disposition of this 3. order, vnto the General and Prouincial Ministers of the Friar Minors; that they might ordaine what they thought conuenient for the conseruation therof, either by themselues or by their visitors or Commissaries of the same Order; the Bull begins *Vota deuotorum*. In fir. Ord. Pope Nicholas the 4. in his Bull *Vnigenitus Dei*. giuen in the yeare after his approbation of this Rule; did the same in these termes. *As naturall reason and equitie conformable*

unable to reason doth teach vs; for the Reuerence due to S. Francis who was the institutor of these two Orders (to wit that of the Friar Minors and this 3. Order) *it is requisite that the Professours of the third Order be gouerned, and ruled by our welbeloued sonnes the Friar Minors. And therfore we ordaine that the visitors and reformers of that Order, be chosen of the said Order of Friar Minors.* And in the end calles those *rebelles & bastard children of the Church and of S. Francis, that should contradict this his decree.* The same hath bene done and confirmed by diuerse ensuing Popes; as hath bene declared in the first part. Which for breuitie sake I omit here, only insisting vpon the authoritie of Pope Sixtus 4. who in the yeare 1471. in his Bull *Romani Pōtificis.* giues the same iurisdiction to the

Friar

Friar Minors, with full authoritie to visite, instruct, reforme, and correct them, as also to admit or receiue any to this Order; withall he giues them power to appoint Visitors and Confessors of their Order, to administer to them the Sacraments.

From whence we conclude that the Generall and Prouinciall Ministers of the Friar Minors; and those to whom they shall commit it, only, haue authoritie to receiue any to this Order. Vnlesse it be in some few places which are subiect to the ordinaries or Bishops of the Diocesse, where such places are. But I would they did often read the fore cited words of Pope Nicholas the 4. and consider what successe commonly doth follow it, when quickly they loose the spirit of the Order. We must also except

those

those parts where this third Order hath Prouincialls of their owne Order, who neuertheleſſe are ſubiect to the Generall of the Friar Minors, and by his authoritie may alſo receiue thoſe that come to this Order.

CHAP. II.

Of the qualities required in thoſe that make Profeſſion in this Order, and what their Profeſſion is.

THe Brothers and Siſters, after they haue borne a whole yeare, the habit of probation (which ought

ought to be of course cloath according to the iudgment of the Visitour) if their conuersation in the Conuent, where they haue borne the habit of probation, shalbe iudged laudable by the discreets of the said convent; may be receiued to the profession of the said Order. In which profession they shall make promise to keepe the Commandements of God, and to make Satisfaction for the transgressions which they shall commit against this third Rule, when it shalbe required of them by their Prelates, or Superiours, liuing in Obediẽce, without

Pro-

Proprietie, and in Chaſtitie.

EXPOSITION.

IN this Chapter are contayned many things touching the Profeſſion of this order. First it is neceſſarie that they make a Whole yeares triall which commonly is called the yeare of their Nouiceship.

2. The Rule without ſpecification of the colour (which without all doubt, ought to be gray) ordaines that their habit should be but of courſe cloath; according to the iudgement of Superiours, in ſeuerall Prouinces.

3. The Rule requires that Nouices doe giue good teſtimonie of their pious conuerſation and intention.

4. It ordaines that the iudgement of the Nouices conuerſation be left to the diſcreets of the Monaſteries, or Conuents, where they haue made their probation or Nouiceship.

5. Supposing the conditions mentioned in the 1. Chap. and those here set downe; they are to be admitted vnto their Profession, by the suffrages and votes of the Communitie.

6. In their Profession or vow, they are to promise to obserue and keepe the Commandements of God.

7. They must vow and promise to performe and accept of what Pennance their lawfull Superiours shall exact of them, for their faults or transgressions against this Rule.

8. They vow to liue in Obedience captiuating their will to the wils of their lawfull Superiours.

9. They must also by the same vow disappropriate themselues of all temporall things to liue in Euangelicall Pouertie.

Lastly they must resolue to liue chastly. To this we may adde (because many of those Monasteries of women

doe

doe vow also enclosure) that they are to put this in their vowes: so that in their vow are contained 6. things, 1. the Obseruãce of the Commandements, 2. Satisfaction for their faults, 3. Obedience, 4. Powertie, 5. Chastitie, and lastly Enclosure.

Note that the Rule makes mẽtion of Brothers and Sisters, because as hath bene shewed in the first part, there are both Religious men and women of this Order, who doe professe this Rule: the Popes hauing accõmodated it to Religious Persons, ordinarily mentiõ both sexes. I must also aduertise the Reader that I haue thought good to differre the declaration of Visitors and Prelates what they are to their proper places: the first to the 8. chapter: and the 2. to the 4.

QVEST.

QVEST. I.

Whether it be neceſſarie that they haue a whole yeares triall?

I will omit here to ſpeake of any triall, that is to be made before there admittance: which in many Orders, eſpecially in ancient times, was commonly practiſed: becauſe now by cuſtome (which is the beſt interpreter of lawes.) ſuch trials are in a mãner taken away, as not neceſſarie, although it were very convenient, that ſome triall ſhould be had of their converſation before they be admitted; which is left to the ſtatutes, cuſtomes, and diſcretion of the Superiours in each Order.

But no Religious Order whatſoeuer; can admit of any one without a whole yeares triall in the

the habit of Probatiō; aſwell that they may know and experience, whether they be able to obſerue and performe all things beloging to their ſtate; as alſo that Religiō may know, whether they are capable and fitting for it. For this end our holy Father ordayned in all his 3. Rules, this yeare of Probation which afterward was generally decreed by the Councell of Trent ſeſſ. 25. c. 15. de Reg. which alſo declares all Profeſſiōs made otherwiſe invalide, and of no force.

This yeare of Probation muſt be continuall, and not diuided, now one part and then another. For the continuation doth adde to he rigour of the Rule, eſpecially in encloſed Monaſteries: notwithſtanding, when they cannot eaſily be cured of ſome dangerous ſickneſſe in the Mo-

nasterie;with leaue of Superiours (who ought prudently to consider the necessitie) they may goe forth , and returning after the recouerie of their health , they may professe at the same time they should haue done , if they had not gone forth. So the Congregation of Cardinals hath declared.

This yeare of Probation ought to be cõpleat; probably speaking to the last moment;that is to say if any one be receiued the 18. of feb at 9. in the morning , the Profession cannot be made before 9. of the same day of the yeare following: in the leppe yeare, a day is to be added, & to preuẽt all difficulties, the custome of professing the Nouices,the next day after the day of their cloathing, in the end of the yeare, hath now preuailed in all places almost.

Vpon

Vpon iuſt occaſions, the Superiours may differre their Profeſſion, as in caſe of ſickneſſe, defect of Age, ſufficient inſtruction or triall, in which caſes they may prolong the time; as alſo in caſe they haue not, or cannot ſo ſoone diſpoſe of their temporall goods, or their Parents or friends neglect to pay their portions, or ſuch like: and generally Superiours may vpon any iuſt ground differre the time of their Profeſſion for the ſpace of three moneths, ſome ſay 5. or 6. Nay after the yeare of Probation is accomplished, with leaue of Superiours, if neceſſitie ſo require, they may leaue the Monaſterie; and after the diſpoſing of their buſineſſe, returne and make their Profeſſion, without making another yeare of Probation.

In this time of Probation, the

Nouices are seriously to practise mentall and vocall prayer; punctually to examine their consciences, mortifie their inclinatiõs and Passions, and flying all vanities, exercise themselues in Austeritie, Fasts, and Abstinences, according to the iudgemẽt of those that are set ouer them, wholy leauing and submitting their wills to the will of their Superiours, wherein principally consists the triall of Nouices; for as Cassianus saith, *Nouices being to renounce the world in a Monasterie, shall first be taught to ouercome their owne wils*: and the Superiour may often commend this vnto them, and sometimes commãd those things, that they shall iudge to be contrary to their minds, and inclinations: declaring also vnto them that a Religious person can by no meanes preuaile against anger, sad-

sadneſſe or melancholy, or ſuch like; vnleſſe firſt they learne to mortifie their wils by Obedience: neither can they retaine true humilitie, firme concord with others, or long remaine in the Monaſterie; vnleſſe they learne to ouercome their proper wils. Briefly according to the end of this Rule, they are to doe penance, for their ſinnes, and endeauour to returne to their firſt Innocency, whereof we haue ſpoken in the firſt part.

QVEST. II.

What is meant by the habit of Probation?

BEcauſe in moſt Orders the habit of Nouices is the ſame that the profeſſed religious doe weare, with ſome little diſtin-

ction, it is conuenient that in this place we ſpeake of both; leaſt we reiterate the ſame againe.

That habits haue bene vſed for diſtinction ſake by all religious, is manifeſt from all antiquitie *Nicephorus* and *Sozemen* make mention of the change of habits, and *S. Deniſe* before them l. Eccl. Hier. p. 2. c. 20. doth shew the ſame in words to this purpoſe. He that is to receiue thē (thoſe who come to take a Religious courſe of life) ought to expound vnto them, the moſt perfect life; openly cōteſting vnto them, that they muſt farre excell a meane, or the ordinary courſe of life; and when they haue promiſed all this ſigning them with the ſigne of the croſſe, let him shaue them, or cut of their haire, invocating the holy Trinitie, and they hauing put of all their ſecular apparell, he is to put

put on another which is the habit of Religion. The life of *S. Antony*. *S. Paule* and other Hermits doe manifeſt the ſame, *S. Ambroſe* l. 6. Epiſt. ex 36. doth expreſſely ſhew, that thoſe who did paſſe to a monaſticall life, did change their ſecular apparell, and take a monaſticall habite. *S. Chryſoſtome* hom. 56. in Matth. deſcribes a Religious habit. S. Deniſe in the place before cited, doth giue this reaſon for the change of their apparell. par. 3. ſaying, *The putting of the former garment, and taking of another, doth ſignifie a tranſordination or paſſing from a middle holy life, to a more perfect* (that is from the honeſt & good cõverſatiõ of faithfull lay people, to the more perfect monaſticall converſation) *and as the change of veſtments, in holy baptiſme doth declare the purgatiue life, aſcending*

vnto the contemplatiue, and illuminatiue habit; so they that are present doe salute the perfect and consecrated religious person, as now coming vnto the holy societie of deiformed or diuine persons. The commõ practise of Gods Church confirmes the same.

What this habit ought to be, great S. Basile declares in the 22. c. of his Rule, *Those*, saith he, *who desire to liue religiously and piously, ought in all things to seeke humilitie, and simplicitie, obseruing for their corporall vse, those things which haue lesse care and trouble annexed to them*; which is also to be obserued in their habits, the Apostle S. Paule in a few words hath giuen vs a Rule herein 1. Tim. 6. *Hauing food & where with all to be couered, with these we are content*: excluding thereby multiplicitie, and varietie, so that the habit

habit ought to be ſuch, that by it the Rule of voluntary pouerty, be not broken, through varietie or curioſitie: and that by the propertie herof, the religious may be knowne of what Profeſſion they are, and may conformably frame their liues, being thereby in a manner forced to avoid many euils, which otherwiſe they might commit.

Our holy Father deſired that his children in their habit, should avoid all curioſitie, and vanitie in apparel; ordaining their habit conformable to their inſtitution; which is of penance, the forme, colour, and matter, ſauouring nothing but penance: the forme is in manner of a Croſſe, to shew that they are truly crucified in Chriſt Ieſus, or ought to be ſo, & that the Croſſe is the ſtandard vnder which they fight againſt

the world, the flesh & the Deuill. The colour, besides that it presents a penitentiall life, being of the colour of ashes or sack cloath, which haue bene alwayes vsed in signe of penance, it is a true symbole of humilitie, and simplicitie.

If we may belieue that venerable preacher, *B. Bernardine a Bustis* who affirmeth it from one that did see it, the coate without seame, (which our Blessed lady did make with her owne hands, for her beloued sonne whilst he was a little one, and which did grow greater with his age) was of the same colour, and it is not vnlikely that she being most humble, was also in habit comformable to her humble sonne: truly it is no small glory to this Order, to weare the like habit which Christ and his B. Mother,

did

did vse here on earth. Briefely this habit in colour is the most contemptible of all mixt colours, becomming those that truely contemne the world, most cõformable to holy pouerty; agreeing to the perfect pouertie they professe; most humble, befitting their humble state, representing penance and alwayes inciting to the memory of death, that they may alwayes prepare themselues for the comming of our Sauiour.

True it is that in this third Order; there hath bene, and is great varietie & diuersitie of habits, according to the seuerall Prouinces and countries; yet the Popes, Generall Chapters, & Superiours of the Order, haue endeauoured to keepe this gray colour in the third Order; aswell as in the first. Besides this gray habit, the Religious women of this Order doe

weare Scapulars of the ſame cloath; in imitation of the garment which Herode put vpon our Sauiour; and to shew their willingneſſe to beare the yoake of Chriſt Ieſus: Their Girdle although ſom-what leſſe, is the ſame with the Friar Minors, and poore Clares; all the children of S. Francis wearing a Chord for their girdle, which is a ſymbole of penance, chaſtitie, and of the Paſſion of our Sauiour. Vpon their heads hauing firſt cut of their haire (which as S. Deniſe in the place aboue cited ſaith: *doth, Signifie a life not fained but cleane and ſincere, a life not framed in diſſemblant and exteriour ſignes exteriourly, or in humaine beauty, but a life adorned in it ſelfe with true vertues, in moſt perfect charitie; inſimating that they ſhould cut of all ſuperfluities,* The Religious of this

Order

Order weare a linnen white vaile in ſigne of the Innocencie and Puritie of life, which they are to embrace. Or as *Nicephorus* ſaith, that they may be ſimple, and not vindicate any iniuries, but liue purely & innocently like little children, whoſe heads are want to be couered with ſuch linnen miters: all the Religious of this third Order who are not encloſed, as alſo all the lay Siſters and Nouices of thoſe that are encloſed; doe weare ſuch white vailes: but the profeſſed ſiſters of thoſe that are encloſed, and are for the quire, doe weare ouer this a blacke vaile as wel to put them in minde of death, and to shew that the Paſſion of our Sauiour ought to be in their memorie, which makes them to mourne for compaſſion of our Sauiours ſufferance, and as it were to accom-

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panie our Blessed lady standing by the crosse: As also to make distinction frō the others; which was granted them by Pope Innocent the 8. in his Bull *Dudum sælicis*. giuen in the yeare 1487. where by Apostolicall authoritie, he declares; that they may take the blacke Vaile, and remaine in perpetuall Enclosure.

To conclude this question; the habit of Probation in this Order, is the same with the habit of the professed, only in monasteries enclosed, where they weare blacke vailes, they haue not the blacke vaile, nor scapular, in other places their is some distinct signe, whereby the Nouices may be knowne from the Professed.

QVEST.

QVEST. III.

Who is to iudge of the Courſneſſe of the habit?

THis Courſeneſſe of habit may ſeeme a ſtumbling blocke to many, who will eſteeme this ſuperfluous, I will not ſay that it is abſolutely neceſſary; but ſure I am Elias was in haire cloath, hauing his reines girded with leather. Iudith had cloath of haire vpon her loynes. S. Iohn Baptiſt had garments of camels haire; the Apoſtle S. Paule teſtifies the ſame of the diſciples of our Sauiour. Heb. 11. they went about in Sheepes skinnes, in goate skins, needy in diſtreſſe, and afflicted: the holy Hermits Hilarion, Antony, Paule, Pachome, Barlaam, with thouſands

more

more did goe in ſackecloath: what ſhall I ſay? all Religious Orders, all Saincts, men or women: All that euer came to any degree of perfection, haue gone this way, more or leſſe imitating the Apoſtle, who ſaid of himſelfe 1. Cor. 9. *I chaſtice my body, & bring it to ſeruitude, leaſt perhaps when I haue preached to others, my ſelfe become reprobate.* Such was the intention of B. S. Francis Xauerius who (perhaps in imitation of S. Francis of Aſſiſium, whoſe name he did beare) did goe in a hempen coate, without any difference of times or ſeaſon; breifely ſuch hath bene the practiſe of the Saints of Gods Church; euen from the beginning of the world. B. Brother Giles being demanded, wherfore S. Iohn, when he neuer ſinned, did lead ſuch an auſtere life? anſwered;

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As flesh is seasoned with salt, least it perish: so the bodie of S. Iohn Baptist was seasoned with pennance. S. Bonaventure tels vs that our holy Father did abhorre soaft garments, and did loue austere and course; affirming that for this S. Iohn Baptist was praised by our Sauiour; and as he loued it in himselfe, so he hath commended it to all his children.

But because the desires of Religious Persons are diuerse, few keeping a meane, in all Orders there hath bene some certaine forme, colour, and qualitie of the cloath, to the end that with vnanimitie of minde, they might militate vnder the banner of Christ *Iesus*, in conformitie of manners, and habits. That as they are, *Rom.* 12. *Of one minde and of one desire to please God*, so they may haue one forme in their life, and habit; that

may

may represét that vnitie of mind: and ſo it hath bene alwayes in the Order of S. Francis; but by reaſon of the diuerſitie of Prouinces, and countries, as aforeſaid: this vniformitie cannot be ſo exactly obſerued, and that thereby many ſcruples or troubles might ariſe; the Popes haue thought good, to leaue the courſneſſe or qualitie of this habit to the iudgement of their Superiours: as here is expreſſely ſet downe and Pope Clement the 7. in his Bull *Ad vberes fructus*; giues authoritie to the Viſitours (that is the Prouincials of the Friar Minors as hereafter shalbe declared) to viſit the houſes, and Monaſteries of this Order, to appoint Miniſters, and Abbeſſes (for ſo he calles the immediate Superiours) according to the neceſſitie of the place: to make Conſtitutions or ſtatutes,

to

to dispense with the Friars and Nunnes, in their garments, habits, fasts and austeritie of this Order: whence it is, that each Prouince hath seuerall Constitutions, some ordayning more austeritie, some lesse, according to the iudgement of their Superiours; who are to doe what is most for the benefit of Religion and good of soules.

QVEST. IV.

What conuersation is required in the Nouices?

THe Apostle Rom. 12. aduises vs that *we should prouide good things not only before God, but also before all men.* That as the wise man saith Pro. 12. *They may find grace and good discipline before God and man*; deuout S. Bernard will tell vs how this is to be done, ser.

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de trip. Iud. *We prouide*, saith he, *good things before man 3. wayes that is by habit, action, and speech; by habit that it be not singular, by action that it be not reprehensible, and by speech, that it be not contemptible. Before God also three wayes, to wit, by cogitation, affection and intention: for the cogitation ought to be holy, the affection pure, the intẽtion vpright:* and in those six things the conuersation of a Nouice may be iudged.

One may gather very much by their habit, for as the wise man saith Eccl. 19. *The cloathing of the bodie, and the laughter of the teeth, and the going of a man, tell of him or declare what he is.* In some there is a desire of fine and curious habits, vailes, celles or the like, who spẽd more time in those than in their deuotions: others are vncleanely, and sluttish, which in a manner

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doth argue a careleſſeneſſe of the puritie of the ſoule; others are negligent in their ordinary attire, ſometimes out of the loue of God; but moſt commonly for want of true and liuely feruour; the beſt is a meane; to comport themſelues with indifferency, yet conforming themſelues to the Religious in whoſe company they liue; and principally following the direction of thoſe that are ſet ouer them. It is a good ſigne when they haue a deſire to obſerue pouertie, and true humilitie in their habit; from whence on may well coniecture the interiour humilitie, the true bage of a Diſciple of Chriſt *Ieſus*.

By their actions alſo, may be diſcerned what ſpirit they are off. for as the wiſe man ſaith Pro. 20. *A child is knowne by his doings, whether his worke be pure, and whether*

it be right. Wherefore if they come with an vpright intention they will as the Apoſtle ſaith Col. 1. *Walke worthie of God in all things pleaſing: fructifing in all good workes, and increaſing in the knowledge of God*, Or as S. Peter ep. 2. c. 1. teachech vs: *They will labour the more that by good workes they may make ſure their vocation and election*. They will willingly doe thoſe things that are enioyned, alwayes are prepared for mortification, and pennance, will patiently ſuffer all iniuries, and wrongs; wilbe charitable, affable, and benigne towards all, prompt in obedience: &c. Promptitude, alacritie, and content in their actions, argues a good diſpoſition.

But there is nothing shewes a man ſo much as the tongue, whence the wiſe man ſaith Pro. 18. *Death and life are in the hand of*

the tongue: whereas in the precedent Chapter, he ſaid, *He that moderateth his ſpeech, is learned and prudent, and a foole when he holdeth his peace is accounted wiſe*. The Apoſtle S. Iames ſaith c 3. *If any man offend not in word: this is a perfect man.* Such as king Dauid was, who ſaid, Pſal. 38. *I will keepe my wayes that I ſinne not with my tongue.* And in the Pſalme precedēt he ſaith, *I as a deafe man heard not, and I was as a dumbe man that openeth not his mouth, thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whoſe mouth were no reproches.* Wherfore Superiours ought to take heede of talkatiue perſons: for the tōgue as S. Iames ſaith c. 3. *Is fire, a whole world of iniquitie*. Theſe three before mentioned are obvious to the eie, and ſo are more eaſily knowne; but in the other three, more caution and prudence

is

is to be vſed, as to know whether their mindes be imployed in ſpirituall things, not carried away with temporall and worldly cogitations; not following the fancie and ſenſes, but alwayes hauing God before their eyes, which may be gathered by their mortified carriage, and behauiour, by their delight in reading or hearing ſpirituall things.

One may gather their affections by marking wherto they are inclined; whether they loue and take delight in their Profeſſiõ, in acts of deuotion and pietie, in the diuine Office, Maſſe, Meditations, and ſuch like, whether they doe all their labours either ſpirituall or corporall, with a willing and prompt minde, rather out of loue than feare or humane reſpect.

Finally Superiours ought well to conſider whether they come to Reli-

Religion with an vpright intention, for the good of their ſoules, to beare the Croſſe of Chriſt, to vndergoe auſterities, mortifications, labours, diſciplines, watchings and ſuch like, for the loue of him that ſuffered ſo much for them, if they haue a deſire to imitate the humilitie, and pouertie of our Seraphicall Father. &c.

QVEST. V.

Who are to iudge of the Nouices converſation: and what Diſcreets are

IT is not to be thought that the admiſſion of Nouices to their Profeſſion doth rely roly vpon the diſcreets: for by the common law of the Church (which the Rule ſuppoſes) & cuſtome of Religious Orders, the whole Com-

munitie is to giue their ſuffrages, for their admiſſion to Profeſſiō, & without the conſent of the Communitie the Profeſſion is invalide. And of this we will ſpeake more in the next queſtion.

But the Superiours with their Diſcreets, before the votes & ſuffrages of the Communitie are to aſſemble together, and there maturely conſider whether that the Nouices Conuerſation, haue bene ſuch, as may be propounded to the Communitie; when if they find any notable defect or want, they may referre it to the Prouinciall; who according to God and his conſcience ſhall diſpoſe of it. The like is to be ſaid, if the major part of the Diſcreets doe diſapproue of them. But if all of them or the greater part iudge it conuenient to put it to the Communitie, they may doe it as in the queſtion fol-

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lowing: here I will shew what is their office and dutie.

In our Generall ſtatutes (whereto the poore Clares, and Religious of the third Order, that are vnder the gouernement of our Order, are ſubiect: in as much as they are compatible with their ſtates,) it is ordayned, that in all Conuents, there be appointed certaine Religious, that are Diſcreet, mature and pious, who are to be called Diſcreets; without whoſe coũſell, & advice, no matter of importance is to be done by the immediate Superiours: the number & election of theſe Diſcreets are left to the cuſtome of each Prouince; howſoeuer they are not choſen ſo much for antiquitie in Religion, as for Diſcretion and iudgement; that they may prudently giue helpe vnto the Superiours by their counſell. For as

the wise man teacheth Pro. 15. *Cogitatiõs are dissipated where there is no counsell: but where many Counsellers are, they are confirmed.* and c. 13. *They that doe all things with counsell, are ruled by wisdome.* and Eccl. 32. *Sonne doe nothing without counsell, and after the fact, thou shalt not repent.* Many eies see more than one.

Wherfore the Superiours are not rashly to doe any thing that concernes the whole Communitie, or that is extraordinarie; without the advise of their Discreets, whence the Rule ordaines, that the admission of Nouices, both to Probation, and Profession, (as being of great importance to Religion) should be left to the iudgement and counsell of the Discreets. Which is declared by the foresaid statute in this manner. *When any one comes to be admitted*

mitted the Superiour or Abbesse together with her Discreets either all, or two or three, according to the custome of the place, are to examine the Partyes to be receiued, first whether they be admitted by the Prouinciall, (for in case that this be not done, they are to send the parties to the Prouinciall, or at least send him word, that he may appoint some other to doe it) after which they are to examine them of those conditions mentioned in the first chapter. If they find them deficient notably in any one, they may prudently deferre their admission; vntill they haue recourse to the Prouinciall. But if they find the partyes capable, they may admit them.

After their cloathing the Superiour with two or three Discreets are to set downe in a booke that is to be kept in the ar-

chiue for the purpose; the place, time, and by whose authoritie they were receiued, together with the name, surname, parents, country and age of the parties receiued, and together with the Nouice subscribd therto. Which also is to be done at the time of their Profession.

Before the votes or suffrages of the Communitie the Superiour and Discreets are to assemble together as aboue.

The Superiour or Abbesse ought to take counsell of her Discreets diuers times in the yeare, concerning the gouernement of the Monasterie, and as often as any businesse of importance doth occurre; which is the counsell of the wise man Eccl. 37. *Before all workes let a true word goe before thee and stable counsell before euery act.* That is before thou dost any worke,

worke, or act, consider with reason, and discretion, what thou are to doe, and follow good counsell.

The Discreets are faithfully, and with the feare of God, to assist the Superiour in all things; and in the name of the whole Communitie to subscribe to what expenses charges, agreements, or such like that are for the Communitie, and by their counsell to further the good and benefit of Religion.

In the Discretory, or to their Superiours, they ought to declare their minds and iudgements freely, without any humane feare or Passiõ: at other times they ought to be silent, and not to meddle with the gouernment of the Cõmunitie, for (besides that they are chosen to giue only their advise and counsell) in medling with the affaires of the house, often times

there ariſeth ſcandall, and diuiſions in the Cõmunitie: through the imprudence and indiſcretion of ſuch Diſcreets, that would ſhew themſelues to be ſo by a more than indiſcreet zeale: and in ſteed of mending one fault, (which ſeldome happens by ſuch meanes) they doe many times more hurt to the Communitie. Wherefore hauĩg religiouſly propounded their opinion, they are not to meddle with it any more, nor be troubled if the Superiour by the aduiſe and counſell of others doth the contrary, or diſpiſe and contemne others, that ſhall religiouſly and according to their conſcience oppoſe them, but content themſelues in hauing done their part.

And if it chance that the thing reſolued vpon, be contrarie to the good of the Communitie, or

not

not so beneficiall; let them simply and resignedly commend it to God, and expect the Visit, when they may prudently declare the whole matter, & expect amendement: leauing it wholy to the disposition of the Visitor. By no meanes murmuring against the Superiours, or other Discreets, or reuealing what is done, or said in Discretory; for such doe breake peace and vnitie, and cause greater euill with it: bringing themselues & Superiours in contempt.

QVEST. VI.

Whether the Communitie is to iudge of the admission of Nouices to their Profession? And what the Sisters are to doe in it?

BEsides what is mentioned in the Rule, concerning the

iudgement of the Discreets in the admission of Nouices. It is the custome in many places, that none be admitted to the Order without the consent of the whole Communitie; which for diuers reasons in other places is omitted. But by the Popes it is ordained that none be admitted to Profession, but by the Votes and suffrage of the whole Communitie.

The manner how this is to be done, is left to the customes and statutes of each Prouince; and therfore here I will only note, that when the Communitie hath giuen their last suffrages; which commonly is about a moneth or six weekes before the time of the Profession; without some vrgent occasion, or vpon some notable defect not knowne before, they cannot wel be put out, but then they haue right to their Profession

ſion and may freely goe or ſtay, according as God ſhall inſpire them. And in caſe that ſuch a defect be found, they cannot be expelled then, before recourſe be had to higher Superiours.

Now becauſe many ſcruples doe ariſe in many good conſciences concerning theſe Votes and ſuffrages, I will briefly ſet downe theſe following Rules.

1. No Religious perſon without iuſt cauſe, canne denie their ſuffrage to any Nouice that is fitting for Religion; for ſo it ſeemes the Counſell of Trent hath commanded ſeſſ. 25. c. 16. de Reg. where it ordaines; that Superiours ought to admit to their Profeſſion ſuch Nouices, as they ſhall find capable, after the yeare of Probation, for ſurely if Superiours are bound to receiue them, the Religious cannot la-

fully deny them. Besides it is against iustice, and charitie, willfully to hinder any one from so great a good as Religion is; and to expose them to so great a danger contrary to their holy vocation: adde that if vnder excommunication, none can hinder any one from going to Religion; how can those be excused that in as much as lies in their power doe hinder their progresse therein.

2. On the cõtrary those cannot be excused, that wittingly and willingly doe giue suffrage for any one that is manifestly vnworthy, or vncaple of Religion; which is to be vnderstood of those that are notably defectiue in the foresaid conditions, or conversation, because this ariseth to the great preiudice and dammage of Religion, which is more to beregarded than any priuate good or interest.

intereſt.

3. If any one be found vncapable of ſome particular obſeruance in Religion, as of ſaying their office, of the ordinarie labours of the Communitie, or of other the common obſeruances of Religion, if their life, Nobilitie, or other circumſtance, may countervaile the loſſe orhindrãce that Religion may ſuffer thereby, prouided that they canne obſerue the eſſentiall obligations of their Rule, or vowes; they may without ſcruple be admitted, and the Religious may lawfully giue their ſuffrage for them; for if they be deficient in one thing, they may helpe in another; if not capable of one imployment they may be imployed in another, at leaſt they may make their ſoules pleaſing to almightie God, which is the cheifeſt thing they should

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aime at, which is to be vnderſtood of ſuch that with a true and ſincere intention come to ſaue their ſoules.

4. Although that ſickely and weake perſons, are not to be admitted, for that many relaxations and liberties may come into Religion thereby; yet vpon iuſt reaſons and motiues, prouided that they come with feruour of ſpirit and deuotion, purely for God; it is hard for any one to deny their ſuffrage for them; for as the diſpenſation of Superiours is ſufficient for the profeſſed Siſters, that are weake and ſickely; ſo the diſpenſation of Superiours in admitting them, is ſufficient for the Religious that are to giue their votes or ſuffrages; ſo that they may ſecurely giue their votes. I doe not ſay they are obliged therto; becauſe that by ſuch the

other

other Religious haue greater trouble and burden laid vpon them, but I esteeme it an act of charitie, that for the loue of God, & the good of soules, they should vndertake the same paines, as most willingly they would doe for any of their Sisters, that are professed; when they fall sicke, they haue occasion of patience, and the Religious haue occasion of charitie, which is to be preferred before all other respects. Verily if they after a yeares triall, be willing to endure it with patiẽce, it seemes hard to deny them that charitie, which euery deuout person would shew to any one in such case of infirmitie.

But some will aske what they shall doe concerning a Nouice that hath bene in the infirmarie for the most part of the yeare of their probation, who doth not know

know or experience the rigour of Religion? I answer, that greater triall may be had of them in such case, than otherwise; for therein may be seene their good intentions, patience, humilitie, obedience, resignation of their wills, pietie, deuotion and confidence in God; with the like: so that of the Communities part they may admit them, and they also in that time may heare what they are to doe, & haue sufficient experience of the loue, charitie, and manners of Religion; besides it suffices to know the austerities, of Religion in a generall manner. Wherfore if all other conditions concurre, they may be admitted especially if there be any hope of their recouery, wherein the Superiours may follow the iudgement of Phisitions.

Finally to comprehend all in one;

one; if the Religious be doubtfull what they should doe, they ought to aske counsell of some iudicious person. For in all doubts in things that touch the good of another, each one is bound to doe his best to avoid the occasiõ of doing any wrong; but if they haue not conveniency to doe this they may obserue this Rule. If they be corporall defects, as deformitie, weakenesse, or such like, prouided that they be any way profitable to Religion, and haue not any defect, that may be preiudiciall therto: they may lawfully giue their suffrage; because their Superiours ordinarily examining them, haue not thought it a sufficient impediment, nay if they know of it, and admit them; they haue in a manner dispensed with them in it; and so all the Religious may and ought to conforme their

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iudgemẽts to them; elſe they may offend him that receiued them, & iniure them that are receiued, inviolating the contract made with their lawfull Superiours. But for ſpirituall imperfections, or ſuch that tend therto, wherof we haue ſpoken in the precedent Chapter, without ſome aſſured groũdes, it is hard to cõdemne any one, for if one be bad to day, to morrow he may be a ſainct. Neuertheleſſe becauſe in this as in all other things of this nature, one muſt proceed after a humaine manner, if it chance that through imperfection they fall notably, and then giue true ſignes of repentance and ſorrow for it, doing their endeauour to amend it; it is not eaſy to deny them their ſuffrages. But if they be peruerſe, ſtubborne, and incorrigible, often committing the ſame, without

any

any ſorrow or repentance; it is better to deny the votes and ſuffrages, and free Religion from ſuch, as may diſturbe the peace of a communitie, and giue ſcandall to Religion.

QVEST. VII.

What Profeſſion in a Religious life is?

IN all times and ages ſince Chriſt, it hath bene the cuſtome when any one did take vpon them a Religious courſe of life, they were to make profeſſiō therof: for to omit Philo the Iew, *Sozemen*, *Nicephorus*, and many others, that doe oftentimes make mention of vowes, and ſuch ſolemne Profeſſiōs, *S. Deniſe* here cited before, Eccl. Hier c. 6. doth declare many particular acts and cere-

ceremonies vſed in ſinch Profeſ-ſions. *S. Ignatius* the Martyr hath many places to this purpoſe, in his Epiſt. to the Antiochians he ſaith, *let the virgins know, to whom they haue conſecrated them-ſelues. Tertullian* cõpoſed a booke of the vailing of virgins, and in one place, ſaith *Thou haſt married to Chriſt, and haſt giuen him thy body, thou haſt eſpouſed to him thy nature, goe according to the will of thy ſpouſe. S. Ambroſe l. 2. de virginibus* ſpeaking of S. Tecla, ſaith, *The day of her crowne the greateſt of all, the virgin hauing profeſſed a double battle of chaſtitie and Religion, is brought forth.* And l. 3. ſpeaking to a deuout virgin. he ſaith, *Doſt not thou remember the holy day of our Lords Reſurrection, wherein at the diuine altar, thou didſt offer thy ſelfe to be vailed &c.* And doe we not read the ſame of *Iphigenia* who con-

conſecrated her ſelfe to God, and receiued the holy vaile from *S. Matthew* the Apoſtle, and was made Superiour of more than two hundred virgins: and when king Hirtacus thought by the Apoſtles meanes to withdraw her from that courſe: the B. Apoſtle did declare it to be vnlawfull, and did confirme *Iphigenia* in her holy purpoſe, and laying his hand on her head, as alſo vpon the heades of the other virgins, did exhort them to conſerue their crowne of perpetuall virginitie. Much more might be ſaid to this purpoſe, but theſe may ſuffice, and therfore I will goe forward in the anſwer of this queſtion.

The Deuines doe commonly define, this Profeſſion to be a promiſe made to God after a whole yeares Probation, in the handes of a Prelate, according to a Rule approued

proued by the Apoſtolicall See, in the obſeruance of the three eſſential vowes. In which are many Conditions.

For firſt it muſt be *a promiſe made to God*, as in the following queſtion ſhalbe declared.

2. It muſt be *after a yeares Probation*, for the profeſſion made before, as the Councel of Trent hath ordained, is of no force. Notwithſtanding by particular Priuiledges granted to Religious from diuers Popes; if within the yeare of Probation, the Nouice be in article of death, he or she may be admitted to the profeſſiõ, but in caſe they die not, at that time; they are to goe forward in the yeare of Probation as if it had not bene done.

3. *In the hands of a Prelate*; that is in the hands of ſuch as haue authoritie to incorporate them into

into the Order; which are only those that haue power to receiue them vnto Religiõ in this Order, by the Prelate we may vnderstand the Generall & Prouinciall, who may delegate others or cõmitt it to the Abbesse, or Superiours of the place for the better conveniency.

4. *According to an approued Rule.* Wherof we haue treated in the first part, and by an approued Rule we may vnderstand an approued state of life; for all Orders haue not a proper Rule, and whatsoeuer vowes or Profession are made any otherwise they are of no force.

Lastly they must promise the obseruance of the three vowes, which are the essentiall parts of Religion wherof in the following questions.

Besides those conditions here men-

mentioned, and what hath bene declared before in the first Chapter. The holy Counsell of Trent hath ordained sess. 25. c. 15. de Regul. that none be admitted to Profession before they be compleatly sixteene yeare old. The yeare of Probation may be any time after twelue yeares old. But the Profession neuer before 16. compleat: and being made before is of no force. And cap. 17. it is ordayned. That the Bishops or Ordinaries of the Diocesse where the Monasteries are, doe either by themselues, or by others, whome they shall appoint, examine the Nouices in Monasteries of Nunnes, before their Profession; whether they doe it of their free will, and know what they are to doe, whether they are forced or seduced by any meanes to Religion; whether they haue

the neceſſarie conditions required to that ſtate, & whether that ſtate bee fitting for them. Which the counſell ordained that they might haue full liberty in making ſuch Profeſſions. For Profeſſion made by force or vniuſt feare, is inualide: and therfore leaſt there should be any fraude, the counſell ſubmits euen the Monaſteries, that otherwiſe are exempted from their iuriſdiction, to the authoritie of the Bishops. And commands the Superiour of the place, vnder paine of ſuſpenſion from their offices, to giue notice to the Bishop a moneth before their Profeſſion. But ſome will aske what they should doe in caſe, that their Profeſſion should be inualide? wherto I anſwer, that if the cauſes of Nullitie be ſuch, as by the law doe exclude them from Religion perpetually; then there

is no remedie, but they may both goe forth and alſo be put forth by Religion: but if the impediment lies on the part of the partie profeſſed, either at that preſent, or in the time to come, they may ratifie their Profeſſion. As for example, Profeſſion before the 16. yeare compleate is invalide, yet if after 16. yeares paſt the partie will, they may tacitely to themſelues renew their Profeſſion, and ratifie what is paſt; if through feare or by force they haue made their Profeſſion, they by giuing a new and voluntary conſent, may ratifie their Profeſſion made tacitely to themſelues; and in both theſe caſes, if they will not ratifie it againe, they may reclaime; at leaſt for any time within fiue yeares, by the Councell of Trent. Let theſe ſuffice, I omit other difficulties to the Ca-

ſuiſts.

ſuiſts. And for the better declaration of the Queſtion propounded I will ſet downe another deſcription of Profeſſion, out of *Pontius l. 7. de Mar.* as followeth.

A Regular Profeſſion is a ſolẽne vow of Obediẽce in ſome approued monaſticall Rule, whereby one doth oblige himſelfe to ſerue Religion, according to ſuch a Rule: and Religion doth in like manner oblige it ſelfe to nourish and treat them according to the ſame Rule: ſo that in Profeſſion we may note two contracts, one of promiſe, which is in the vow of Obedience in ſuch a Rule; which is an act of that vertue which diuines call Religiõ, or Religious worship, which is made to God, ſo whom alone vowes are made. The other of Donation wherein the Perſon profeſſing doth giue himſelfe to Reli-

gion; and Religion on the contrary doth accept of him: of theſe two for more cleareneſſe I ſhall ſpeake in the two Queſtions following.

QVEST. VIII.

What a Religious vow is, and what benefit redounds thereby?

SAinct Thomas defines a vow to be a promiſe deliberatly made to God, of ſome greater good: firſt it is ſaid to be a *promiſe*, becauſes deſires & purpoſes are not ſufficient, vnleſſe there concurre an intention to oblige themſelues to doe this or that. 2. there is requiſite *a deliberation*, ſuch as is neceſſarie to make an act good or bad. So that if there be not a deliberate intention, it is

no vow, at leaſt that obligeth any way, but many times leuitie of minde. 3. It ought to be *a deliberate promiſe* which only hath the nature of an obligation: for indeliberate purpoſes doe neuer oblige. 4. The matter of a vow ought to be of *ſome greater good*, as to make ſome pilgrimage, enter into Religion, or ſuch like.

To breake ſuch vowes without all doubt is a greiuous offence before God. So S. Auguſtine teacheth vs, l. de Sanct. vid. c. 11. *When any one doth not render what he had vowed, not forced by any command but adviſed by counſell, by ſo much more he doth encreaſe the impietie of his defrauded vow, by how much he had leſſe neceſſitie of vowing.* Whence the Eccleſiaſtes cap. 5. ſaith *If thou haſt vowed anie thing to God differre not to pay it, for an vnfaith-*

 A declaration of the third
full and foolish promise displeaseth;
But whatsoeuer thou hast vowed,
pay it. It is indeed euill, saith O-
limpiodorus, *and detestable if thou*
wouldest giue nothing to God: but
it is much worse if thou shouldest
promise any thing to God, and
shouldest not performe it. Of vowes
see the Remish testament, prin-
cipaly on the 5: Chapter of the
1. ep. to Timothee. I will only
produce the testimony of Ori-
gen, who according to his wont-
ed custome, doth excellently ex-
plicate the nature and obligation
of a vow. hom. 24. in Num. I
know, saith he, *diuerse vowes are*
found in the Scripture, *Anna did*
vow to God the fruict of her wombe,
& consecrated Samuel in the Tẽple.
Another vowes to God whatsoeuer
shall occurre vnto him in the way
returning from victorie, and his
daughter meeting him, he performed
his

his deplorable vow: some other did offer to God calues, and rams, or some other irrational things. But he that was called Nazarite vowed himselfe to God, for this is the vow of the Nazarites, which is aboue all manner of vowes: for to offer sonne or daughter, cattel or patrimonie, are all out of vs; but to offer ourselues to God, and to please him with our owne labour, and not with others labour, is more perfect and eminent than all other vowes. He that doth this, is the imitator of Christ: God gaue to man the earth, sea, and all things in them for his seruice; he gaue also the heauens, sunne, moone and starres, for the ministerie of man, he hath bestowed on man raine, winds, and euery thing that is in the world; and after all this hath giuen himselfe. So God loued the world that he would giue his only begotten sonne for the

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life of this world. Wherfore what
great thing doth man doe, if he offers
himselfe to God, to whom God first
offered himselfe. If therfore thou
takest vp thy crosse and followest
Christ: if thou must say, I liue but
now not I, but Christ liues in me,
if our soule desireth and thirsteth to
returne and be with Christ, as the
Apostle saith, and is not delighted
with the allurements of this present
world, it doth so spiritually per-
forme the law of the Nazarites,
then we offer to God our selues that
is our soule. He that liued in Cha-
stitie hath vowed his body vnto
God, according to him that said,
The virgin doth thinke how she
may be holy in body and spirit; for
in that he said holy, he hath refe-
rence to this; for those are said
to be holy, who haue vowed them-
selues to God: as for example the
Ramme vowed to God is said to

be

be holy, and it is not lawfull to sheere him for common vses, so the calfe vowed to God is called holy, & not to be applied to common workes; from whence we may gather what it is for a man to vow himselfe to God. If thou hast vowed thy selfe to God; thou must imitate the calfe which may not serue for humaine workes, thou must doe nothing which pertaineth to men, or to this present life, but thou art to doe and thinke what pertaines to the soule, and obseruance of the Diuine worship.

From all which we may inferre, that Religious vowes are as it were contracts, betweene God and our soules; and from thence ariseth an obligatiõ on our parts, so that none can goe backe from their passed vowes, vnlesse they become Apostates; and incurre eternall danger to their soules.

As for the benefits that redound by theſe vowes of Religion they are innumerable; the principall and chiefeſt is the coniunction and vnion of the ſoule to God, after a more noble and excellent manner; for the vow of Religion is the moſt excellent of all other vowes, and excells all other ſacrifices.

From whence ariſeth another benefit, which is that all other vowes may be changed into a vow of Religion; yea by the expreſſe Profeſſion in any Religious Order, approued by the Church all vowes of themſelues are changed into the vow of Religion: although the party vowing doe not reflect vpon their paſſed vow: or had no intention to change it; becauſe all precedent vowes were but of particular things, this is generally of all things; all

things

things in this world are giuen to God, yea the whole man doth mancipate himselfe to the seruice of God.

In like manner all oathes, that are not preiudiciall to another are taken away, and doe no more oblige: as for example, if any one had sworne to goe to Rome for deuotion, or such like, they may leaue this pious pilgrimage and enter into Religion.

Moreouer by a Religious Profession or vowes, those that make them doe gaine a plenaty indul-dulgence or remission of all the paine, that is due for their sinnes: whence S. Hierom, S. Bernard, and other Fathers doe call this Profession, a second Baptisme. S. Thomas giues the reasō, because, saith he, if one may satisfie for his sinnes by almes, much more by giuing all: yea our whole selues.

Some doe not ſtick to ſay that by renewing ſuch Profeſſion, at any time, one may gaine the like grace. Howſoeuer, it is certainely a very meritorious act, and much benefitteth the ſoule. Some reckon amongſt the benefits of theſe vowes, that by entring in Religion with intention to make it; if they were vncapable of inheritance by reaſon of ſome offence they haue committed againſt their parents & ſuch like: they are therby reſtored to their former right againe, both for good, and fame: ſo that they may inherit, and being baſe borne, are made legitimate, and may be witneſſes, as they ſay, without exception, all which common & ciuill law haue ordayned in fauour of Religion.

To conclude this article: Thoſe that come to Religion, are as dead

dead to the world; Profeſſion in the law being eſteemed as a ciuil death, in ſuch caſes as are expreſſed in the law. Wherfore as they are dead to their proper will and iudgement; ſo they are dead to all temporall goods in particular; and thereby not capable of any ſucceſſion, dominion or the like, which doth not contradict the former; for that is vnderſtood of them before their Profeſſion, when they are capable of it and may lawfully diſpoſe of their goods, but after their Profeſſion they are vncaple of ſuch, but are ſteemed as dead; and therfore a teſtament or will made before Profeſſion is of full force, as if it were in the time of a naturall death.

QVEST.

QVEST. IX.

What is the mutuall tradition or contract that is made in Profession betweene Religion & him that makes such Profession?

SAinct Thomas saith that Religion is a state of perpetually acquiring perfection, by the three vowes; Now a state according to him, is an inimutable condition of a person, according to seruitude and libertie, with an obligation by a certaine solemnitie, as appeares in Matrimony and Episcopacy. Which immutabilitie cannot be but that there must be some donation whereby he that is put into a state doth passe into the right and power of another, so that without offence a-

gainst

gainſt iuſtice they cannot be ſeparated; as the husband from his wife, & Bishop from his paſtorall care; the like may be ſaid of a Religious man, and his Order, which he profeſſeth. Wherfore as in thoſe, there is a donatiõ & mutuall contract, ſo in this; wherby the Religious perſon doth fully giue himſelfe vnder the right, iurisdiction, dominion, and power of ſuch Superiours, as by the Order are appointed; and they by this donation doe acquire a paternall right, & power ouer him; which made the holy Counſell of Trent ſeſſ. 25. c. 9. to leaue the gouernement of Religious perſons to the Superiours of their Order; & the Congregation of Cardinals to declare that the Ordinaries or Bishops haue no iuriſdiction ouer the Nunnes, that are vnder the gouernement of Religious Prelats,

lats, who by vertue of this do-
nation approued and corrobora-
ted by the Popes authoritie, haue
as it were Episcopall authoritie;
and as Bishops doe place Pastors
ouer their seuerall parishes: so
Religious Prelats doe ordaine Su-
periours in the houses or Mona-
steries that are subiect vnto them;
to whō by vertue of their vowes
the Religious are subiect, and
without their licence, cannot sub-
mit themselues to any other vp-
on what prætext soeuer; as the
same Councell declares c. 4.

Briefely in this Professiō there
is a mutuall traditiō; for in the Su-
periours appointed or ordayned
for that end in Religion, there
ariseth an obligation of Pastorall
care and loue ouer those that
submit themselues to them; for
whome also they are bound to
prouide meate, cloathing, and
other

other neceſſaries; much more all things that are neceſſarie for their ſoules, leaſt their bloud be required of their hands by almightie God. I ſhall ſpeake more of this in the chapter of the Superiours.

In thoſe who make this Profeſſion ariſeth alſo an obligation of obedience, reuerence, and reſpect to their Superiours: as to their Father, maſter, and lord. S. Hierome doth giue this counſell Ep. ad Ruſt. Mon. *feare the Superiour of the monaſterie, as thy lord; loue him, as thy Father: belieue it to be profitable for thee, whatſoeuer he commands, neither doe thou iudge the ſentence of thy elders; for it is thy office, or duty to obey, and accomplish, what is commanded thee:* Our holy Father S. Francis in his laſt teſtament, did acknowledge this obligation; when he ſaid, *I will firmely*

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firmely obey to the Generall Miniſter of this Fraternitie, to that Guardian, he ſhall pleaſe to giue me, and be ſo captiuated in his hands, that I cannot goe or doe, beyond his Obedience and will: becauſe he is my lord. See more of this ſubiect in the queſtion of Obedience. I will only ſay here; that amongſt other infinite benefits of a Religious life this is not the leaſt, that a Religious perſon by this Profeſſion doth caſt the care of all things vpon the shoulders of their Superiours; and ſuffer themſelues as children to be carried in their armes, to be fedde, nourished, & cloathed by them; ſo that they doe as it were ſleeping without care, or ſollicitude, make their iourney vnto the celeſtiall kingdome; whence S. Climacus ſaith that *Obedience* (which is offered in this Profeſſion) *is a perfect abnegation*

gation of our proper ſoule, and body: a voluntarie death; a life without ſolicitude, a Nauigation without danger, a ſepulture of the will, it is to make a iourney ſleeping, by impoſing our burthen vpon others; and to ſwimme vpon the shoulders of others, leaſt we be drounded.

QVEST. X.

Whether the Religious of this Order are bound by any new obligation to keepe the Commandements?

THis Queſtion ſeemes to haue ſome difficultie, becauſe vowes of their owne nature doe carry with themſelues an obligation; ſo that it may ſeeme to ſome, that thoſe who vow to obſerue the Commandements, in breaking the Commandements, doe

doe commit a double ſinne: one againſt the poſitiue law of God, and another againſt their vowes; but without any reaſon as I ſhall endeauour to declare.

For firſt as *S. Thomas*, and all his ſchoole teacheth, It is a catholique and moſt aſſured veritie, that it is lawfull & meritorious to promiſe or vow to God, to obſerue the Commandements, and other obligatiõs: notwithſtãding that one is obliged therto by the law; as may be ſeene in the Patriarke Iacob, Gen. 28. where he vowed that our lord ſhould be his God. Deuout King Dauid did the ſame, when he ſaid Pſal. 118. *I ſware & haue determined to keepe the iudgement of thy Iuſtice* that is as the Gloſſe ſaith *I haue irreuocably purpoſed and moſt firmely determined for euer to obſerue, & neuer tranſgreſſe thy Commande-*

ments.

ments. In Circumcision, Baptisme, Confirmation and Profession of our faith is there not at least an implicite vow? Paulus V. ordaining a solemne Professiõ of our faith, endeth with these words. *I promise, vow, & sweare all aboue said*, notwithstanding that all are bound to belieue the articles of our faith. And what more frequent than to make vowes of Continency, and coniugall chastitie? & who can condemne the vowes that are made of not being drunke, not to sweare or such like? and yet these are things commanded: so that the vow of keeping the Commandements is lawfull and good.

2. It is the opinion of many diuines, that if any one make a vow of keeping the Commandements, or any other thing that hath the nature of a precept, with inten-

intention to oblige himselfe by a new obligation, by vertue of their vow; there ariseth by such a vow a double obligation, one from the precept or Commandement, the other from the vow; so that those who make such vowes in breaking such a vow doe commit two sinnes, and so are to confesse them, or in Confession are to declare this circumstance of the vow, which changeth the nature of the sinne making it rather sacrilege.

3. To omit many other doubts in this point which I leaue to the Casuists, in answere to the Question propounded. It is certaine that this vow contayned in the Rule of obseruing the Commandements, doth not adde a new obligation; which first I proue from the authoritie of Estius in 4. sent. dist. 38. §. 2. where speaking of

of ſuch vowes in generall; he ſaith that *a vow made of a thing that is commanded, with intention of making a new obligation, doth oblige as aboue ſaid. But if it be done without any ſuch intention, then there is no new obligation; but only a declaration or an acknowledgement of the duty, wherto before they were obliged; as in Baptiſme where there is a vow of things that oblige by the law of nature. And ſuch was the vow of the children of Iſrael* Exod. 19. and 24. 4. Reg. 11. Nehem. 10. *ſith therfore ſuch promiſes doe not induce any obligation diuerſe from the former, it followeth that by the ſame violation of the precept, no new ſinne doth ariſe, but only one ſinne aggrauated by this circumſtance in the ſame Kind.* Vpon which I inferre that ſuch is the nature of this vow, and conſequently it is ſuch, that brings no

new

new ſinne, vpon the tranſgreſſours of the Commandements.

2. According to the cõmon opinió of Diuines, a vow is a kind of priuate law, obliging according to the intention of him that makes it. If therfore thoſe who make this vow doe not intend to oblige themſelues after that manner; it followeth that there atiſeth no ſuch obligation there by: Now thoſe that profeſſe this Rule haue no ſuch intention, but only intend to obſerue the Rule as it is in it ſelfe, which Rule expreſſely takes away ſuch oligation; and this will giue vs a third reaſon.

3. In l. ſi quis nec cauſam & in l. non omnis ff. *ſi tertium petatur.* the obligation of the law depends of the will of the law giuer, and therfore if the law giuer will not oblige to mortall ſinne; the law cannot obige; whence I inferre;

the

the obligations of Religious persons, making as it were a law, can oblige no further, than the maker, approuer or confirmer of the Rule did intend; Now in the last chapter of the Rule, our holy Father who made the Rule declares the contrarie; to wit that his intention was not to oblige them, and Pope Leo the tēth who approued, confirmed and accommodated this Rule for Religious, declares the same; specifying certaine things that oblige, & makes no mention of this; and therfore without all doubt, his intention was not to oblige therein, and consequently those that make such vowes are not subiect to any new obligation; for as Sotus l. 8. quest. 2. ar. 1. well saith. *He that vowes to obserue a law which obligeth not vnder mortall sinne, doth not oblige himselfe vnto mor-*

Finally the ſame reaſon is of vowes, as of oathes, Now, according to all, an oath made to obſerue ſtatutes of a kingdome, country, Citie, common weale or Vniverſitie is alwayes to be vnderſtood according to the obligation of the ſtatutes in themſelues. In the like manner vowes of Communities (as Gabriel in 4. diſt. 38. well teacheth) are to be interpreted rather according to the common intention, which wiſe or learned men haue or ought to haue, than to the intention of the vowes. And may we not ſay the ſame of the vowes, made of this Rule? to wit, that the obligation of ſuch vowes, is to be eſteemed according to the iudgement of wiſe and learned men; who in all times haue iudged that no new obligation vnder

mor-

mortall ſinne doth ariſe frō ſuch vowes. Adde that Gerſon cited by the foreſaid Gabriel affirmeth: *Howſoeuer the words in themſelues doe ſound, yet ſuch interpretation is to be had of them aſwell according to iuſt reaſon, and diſcretion of Superiours, as alſo according to the law of charitie.* Now according to reaſon, ſpeaking of Communities, none ſhould oblige himſelfe to ſo great dāger; Superiours haue neuer intended it; nor the law of charitie euer required it.

I hope the pious Reader will pardō my prolixitie in this point, ſith this hath beene a ſtumbling blocke to many; for ſome fearefull conſciences haue beene troubled by it, and ſome haue lauishly detracted from this ſtate of life by it. I hope both wilbe ſatisfied in it. But ſome will demād, wherfore then doe they make an ex-

preſſe vow of it? this will miniſter an occaſion of another Queſtion as followeth.

QVEST. XI.

Wherfore the Religious of this Order doe promiſe in their vowes to obſerue the Commandements?

ALthough this Queſtõ hath beene in a manner already anſwered by Eſtius in the precedent arguments; yet for the better ſatisfaction & declaration of this point; I will a little more dilate my ſelfe in ſetting downe this poſition.

The promiſe that the Religious of this Order doe make to obſerue the Commandements is lawfull, meritorious, profitable, and much tending to the perfe-

ction

tion of à Religious ſtate.

Firſt that it is lawfull, hath beene ſufficiently proued before, and may be gathered out of S. Thomas. 2.2. q.88. ar.2. where he ſaith that *thoſe workes without wich ,we cannot obtaine ſaluation may fall vnder a vow: in as much as they are done voluntarily.*

2. Although this promiſe haue not ſtrictly the nature of a vow: which addeth a new obligation; yet in its kind ,it is meritorious: for to make any good purpoſe or reſolution of any thing which in it ſelfe is vertuous, is meritorious: and therfore we may apply the words of S. Thom. To exhibit due ſervice to God, may be an act of vertue: in as much as a man doeth it voluntarily and where neceſſitie is, the glorie of ſupere-rogation is taken away, but the merit of vertue is not excluded; if

there be a will, or full purpose to performe it; and S. Bonaventure affirmeth, that such promises are vertuous and so meritorious.

3. It is profitable; for by this vow, they ratifie and confirme the former obligation, by cordiall & louing affection; making that which was in a manner a seruitude, by this voluntary oblation and promise, to become in some sort a sacrifice and holocaust of the heart and will; for the will doth hereby voluntarily accept of such an obligation, and maketh an oblation of loue, and according to the Councell of the Prophet Dauid *Psal.* 4. doth *sacrifice the sacrifice of Iustice*; that is, as the Glosse saith. *It doth not only make an externall sacrifice, but an internall one of Iustice, and obseruation of the Commãdements.* Moreouer by this vow, the heauy burden of the

law

law is changed into a moſt ſweet yoake of deuout affection; that which was commanded is conſecrated to God vnder a more perfect & more excellent title. Well might King Dauid ſay *Pſal.* 1. *Bleſſed is the man whoſe will is in the Way of our lord, and who will meditate in his law day and night. Who is wholy delighted and occupied in keeping Gods Commandements.* And may we not ſay, bleſſed are thoſe, that make ſuch vowes, which implie in themſelues this will and delight? For they doe not obſerue the law any more through feare, or neceſſitie: But voluntarily, and freely, and haue ſo dedicated themſelues to God through loue, that all theire thoughts and deſires, are wholy bent to keepe his Commandements. Finally this vow hath in it ſelfe a moſt generous reſolution,

for it carrieth or ought to carrie with it, this ſenſe: Although there were no heauen, no hell, no Commandement nor obligation, yet purely out of the loue that I beare to my God, and out of a deſire that I haue to conforme my ſelfe to the will of my God; I will alwayes obſerue thoſe things that now are commanded by him.

Laſtly ſuch vowes doe much tend to the perfection of a Religious ſtate; for the Eſſentiall vowes of Religion, being but of Counſell, doe ſuppoſe the obſeruance of the Commandements; and therfore if we will conſecrate our wills to the performance of ſuch things, that are of Counſell, we ought firſt to conſecrate our wills to the performance of ſuch things as the law of God requires of vs; this ſeemes to be a neceſſarie preparation, or diſpoſition confor-

conformable to the words of our Sauiour. *Mat.* 19. where before he did teach the yong man the more excellent way of perfection, which consisted in counsels he aduised him *to keepe the Commandement*. Paulus de Palacio discoursing in this place, saith: *Doe you not vnderstand, why our Lord did endeauour to draw the yong man to so great perfection? truly because from his infancy he had loued and kept by gods grace the Commandements; and therfore now was more fitting to be adorned with the gift of perfectiõ.* And without all doubt it is a necessarie disposition, for the better performance and execution of the Euangelicall counsells, to haue a prompt and ready minde, and will to obserue the Commandements. And this is required in all Religious persons, although the Religious of this

Order doe make an expresse and solemne Profession of it, as the Religious of that ancient and glorious Order of S. Bennet doe make in their vowes a promise of conversion of manners; which nevertheless all Religious persons ought to doe.

QVEST. XII.

What satisfaction the Religious are to make for the transgressions of the Rule?

BEfore I enter further into this Questiõ, I haue thought good to adde a word or two for the satisfaction of some, whose pious opinion may cause them to admire that such persons who pretend so great perfection, and haue so wholy consecrated themselues to God, should haue any faults, or im-

or imperfections in them, whereby they might deserue any corrections and punishments.

Such doe not consider humaine frailty, and that as *Stobæus* saith: *malice is naturall to all mortall men*. Doth not the Apostle S. Paule tell vs; Gal. 5. *the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh*. Which conflict Cassianus doth excellently explicate for Religious persons. coll. 4. *the flesh*, saith he, *is delighted with lust and pleasure, the spirit doth not so much as giue way to naturall desires. The flesh coueteth to be satiated with sleepe, and filled with meat. The spirit is fatned with watchings and fastings, scarcely admitting sleepe or foode, euen to the necessarie vse of life: the flesh desires to abound in all plentie: the spirit is not content to haue the quotidian substance of a little*

 A declaration of the third
bread: the flesh is comforted with
vaine praises and honours: the spi-
rit takes ioy in persecutions and in-
iuries. And S. Augustine in Psal.
75. saith: *Warre is declared vnto*
thee not only against the suggestions
of the Deuill but against thy selfe:
how against thy selfe? against thy
euill customes, against thy former
euill life, which draweth thee to thy
wonted custome and bridles thee
from the new. And Ser. 43. de ver.
Dom. he saith *the spirit coueteth*
against the flesh in good men, not
in euill men who haue not the spi-
rit of God, against whom the flesh
should court. Wherfore it is no
wonder that euen Religious per-
sons haue their imperfections, as
well as others, but herein they
haue the aduantage that their
whole endeauour tends to ouer-
come them, and that if it chance
they fall, their rising is not long
defer-

deferred. Whence *S. Bernard; They fall more seldome, and doe sooner rise after their fall.* Neither is Religion said to be so much a state of perfection as a state of acquiring or getting perfection.

Wherfore no maruell if sometimes they faile, faile I say, not fall; for generally speaking, their faults to worldlings are no faults: that which to others is lawfull, in them is punishable; for to be absent from the quire, especially at midnight is a hainous fault, vnlesse it be with leaue of Superiours, vpon some reasonable occasion; to eat or drinke out of times without leaue, is a deformitie in Religion, with a thousand such like; and admit that some one or two amongst fiue hundred should commit some hainous crime, or giue scandall; shall any one wonder at this? Was not

Dauid

Dauid a man according to Gods owne heart? and yet he did fall, no leſſe eaſily, than grieuouſly; In the ſchoole of Chriſt Ieſus, where was the marrow and excellency of all perfection, although they were but twelue perſons, was not there Apoſtaſies? deniall of faith? ambitions, quarrels, diſſenſions & ſuch like? may not there be the like in Religious Monaſteries?

Wherfore let none wonder at ſuch, but with humilitie conſider that if thoſe who haue ſo many meanes of perfection doe faile, or fall, what care ought I to haue of my ſelfe. Pardon I pray my neceſſary digreſſion, and let vs returne to the Queſtion propounded.

All Religious by vertue of the mutuall contract or Tradition, which is made in the act of their Profeſſion, wherof we haue

ſpoken

ſpoken before, doe implicitely oblige themſelues to this law; for as the ſeruant is vnder the correction, reprehenſion and chaſtiſement of the maſter, the child to his parents, and ſoulders to their Captaines & Commanders, without which there would be no order; diſcipline, or gouernement; euen ſo, becauſe as is aboue ſaid by this act of Profeſſion there ariſeth in the Superiour a Dominion, power, & iuridiction ouer the Religious ſo profeſſing, and in the Religious a ſubiection and ſubmiſſion vnto their commands, corrections, and reprehenſions, there would be no Order, no gouernement, no diſcipline, yea no Religion it ſelfe, if delinquents, or ſuch as are faultie ſhould not be ſubiect to make ſatisfaction for the faults committed, that is to doe ſuch penances,

ſuch

ſuch acts of mortification, as shalbe judged convenient by the Superiours; aſwell to moue the party ſo doing to amend his fault, as alſo to put others in minde of their duty, and to giue ſatisfaction, many times edification to the Communitie; who cannot but be edified, when they ſee a fault through frailty committed, to be expiated with ſuch ſorrow, manifeſted by their penitential actions.

To this end in all Religious Communities there be aſſemblies of all the Religious once or twiſe in the weeke or oftener, which they ordinarily call Chapters: wherein, as by the generall ſtatutes of our Order is ordained, the faults and day ly negligences are to be acknowledged, and the Superiour is to admonish them for the better obſeruance of the

Rule,

Rule, and denounce ſuch things as he ſhall find conuenient for the auoyding of diſorder, and commend to their prayers the particular benefactors that haue any way aſſiſted them. Our Seraphicall Doctor *S. Bonaventure* doth giue certaine Rules to be obſerued in theſe Chapters.

1. The Religious ought to honour the Chapter, and reuerence it as a ſchoole of mortification giuen from God; and as it were an image of the diuine conſiſtorie or judgement ſeat.

2. They ought to come thither alwayes well prepared, to vndergoe ſuch corrections and pennances, as ſhalbe injoyned them.

3. When the offenſe or fault is publicke (which is ſaid becauſe they are not to ſpeake of their ſecret faults or ſinnes, vnleſſe they will for their greater mortification)

tion) they ought to make publicke Confeſſion, with their hands joyned, and proſtrate to the ground, in a few words ſimply & plainely declaring their faults, by no meanes accuſing others.

4. If at any time in Chapter, or otherwiſe, they be reprehended ouer ſeuerely and more than the fault requires, let them not be troubled, but rather let them rejoyce, for the diligent care of their Superiours; who doe reprehend and correct whom they loue; as alſo for the exerciſe of vertue, that is preſented vnto them. And at the words or corrections, let them exult for Chriſt, and be humbly ready to ſuſtaine them,

5. Let them affect or loue to be corrected, and reprehended of all; for he that will not be corrected, will not be amended: let them be admonished willingly, and reprehended

hended patiently, for patience is an approved vertue, which makes them gracious before God and man.

6. Let them by no meanes defend or excuse their fault, for the fault defended is doubled. Our holy Father *S. Francis* said, *Blessed is the seruant who is not hasty to excuse himselfe, and doth humbly sustaine shame and reprehension where he hath committed no fault.*

7. When they are not guilty of those things, wherof they are accused, how innocent soeuer they be, hauing first offered to make satisfaction, if they be demanded the truth, or haue leaue to speake the truth, they may with reuerence shew their innocencie.

8. Let them accustome themselues, when they are reprehended by their Superiour, on their knees

knees to acknowledge their fault; for this is an ancient law of Religion, giuen by our holy Father *S. Francis* and other Saincts.

9. In the Chapter they are not to speake, but for two causes, to wit, in declaring their faults breifly, and humbly answering to the demands of their Superiour.

These are generall Rules for all Religious; but besides these, the Religious of this Order are to consider that in this their vow, they make a more expresse promise to accept of such pennances, and corrections, than most of other Orders doe, & therfore may seeme to haue a more expresse obligation therto than any other Religious haue. So that without offence, they cannot repine or murmure, much lesse neglect or contemne the pennances that are injoyned them; but simply consider

ſider their promiſe that they haue made, and how that voluntarily of their owne accord they haue ſubmitted thẽſelues to ſuch pennances; Now what their obligation is, and in what cauſes they may offend herein, I muſt here omit to its proper place in the laſt Chapter of the Rule.

I omit here alſo to ſpeake of ſuch pennances, and corrections as are ordayned by the law of the Church, for which each one is liable to the judgement and cenſures of their Superiours, in as ample a manner as others are ſubiect to their Bishops, or rather more; according to the power that hath beene giuen them by Popes.

QVEST.

QVEST. XIII.

What is the neceſsitie of Obedience in a Religious ſtate?

SOme haue very well ſaid, that ſuch is the neceſſitie of this vertue of Obedience, that without it no kind of life, no inſtitute, no Rule, can ſtand; for although it be a ſpeciall or particular vertue; yet it hath a generall extent to all vertuous actions, and therfore is ſaid to be the forme all vertues. And it ſeemes Natnre intēded this vertue, when it ordayned, that each thing ſhould haue dependence of others. Cicero will haue this Obedience to be neceſſarie to all humaine and ciuill ſocietie; & compares it to the concord or conſort of Muſicke; for although in Mu-

Musicke some play singular well, yet if there be not good concord or concent amongst them, the Musicke will want its grace; so saith he, although there be many wise men in a citie, yet if there be not a concordant subordination, there can be no good gouernement. May we not say the same of Religion that although there be many deuout persons much addicted to the seruice of God: yet if there be not an vnanimous consent in all well gouerned subordination by Obedience, Religion will be no more a state of perfection, but rather a confusion of Babel. Euery one speaking his one language, and euery one following their owne judgement, which might easily runne to the destructiõ of their otherwise happy state. Euen as in cities if euery owne should follow their owne

dicta-

dictamen, they would be no more a well composed state, but disordered and confused company. Wherfore as in cities it is necessarie that all the inhabitants be subject to the good lawes that are ordained for their conseruation; so in Religion it is necessarie that the Professours therof be obedient, in obseruing what the Rule requires of them; *for Religious Obedience is a vertue, whereby those who are taken to a Religious societie, doe liue according to the prescript of their Rule, in obeying their lawfull Superiours.*

Sainct Thomas proues the necessitie of this Obedience; by a comparison to naturall things; for, saith he, In the naturall Order of things created, the higher by a certaine naturall vertue, are wont to moue the inferiour; and so it ought to be in Religion, that

that the higher power command the inferiour ; whence S. Paul saith Rom. 13. *Let euery soule be subiect to higher powers, for there is no power but of God. And those* (powers) *that are, of God are ordained, and therfore he that resisteth power, resisteth the ordinance of God.* Which made S. Bernard to say. *If God or man, that is the Viccar of God, should command any thing, whatsoeuer it be, with like care we must obey, and with like reuerence we must performe it ; excepting only this, that he should command any thing contrary to God.* S. Basil saith ; *If S. Paul did command all Christians to be subiect to those who by humaine law had receiued power to command them whether infidels, or others : what reuerence is due to him that is constituted President by God ouer vs, & hath receiued power from the diuine*

 A declaration of the third law, for the Prelate is no other than he that ſuſtaines the perſon of Chriſt, and is a mediatour betweene God and man, ſacrificing to God the ſaluation of thoſe who are vnder his care. Which made *S. Bernard* to ſay, *Ye that haue once committed the care of your ſelues to vs, why doe ye againe meddle with your ſelues*; as it were exhorting Religious perſons ſo to eſteeme of themſelues as now no more their owne, but Gods: for whoſe ſake they haue giuen themſelues to be gouerned in Religion conformable to their Rule.

QVEST. XIV.

What is the excellency of Obedience?

OBedience is commendable for many reaſons, ſome wherof

wherof we will here ſet downe; Firſt by Obedience, vertue is much encreaſed and augmented: for as the wiſe man ſaith, *Pro.* 1. *My ſonne heare the diſcipline of thy Father and leaue not the law of thy mother: that grace may be added to thy head, and a chaine of gold to thy necke.* As if he had ſaid: O Religious ſoules who by your wills haue made your ſelues ſubiect, heare the diſcipline, inſtruction, & commands of your Superiours, by truely obeying them, according to the law of your Mother Religion, ſo ſhall you adde a crowne of vertues to your minde, and enioy the grace and fauour of God. For Obedience commandeth all vertue, and makes a chaine, or an indefatigable operation of vertue, linking one vertue to another. Whence Venerable Bede ſaith that *Obedience is*

the only vertue, which ſoweth other vertues in the minde, and keepeth them ſowen.

2. By Obedience we obtaine a moſt noble victorie; whence the wiſe man ſaith Pro. 21. *An obedient man ſhall ſpeake victorie.* That is by obedience he ouercommeth himſelfe, his will, and his proper iudgement. Or as *S. Gregorie* will haue it; *Whilſt we humbly ſubiect our ſelues to anothers voice, we ouercome our ſelues in heart.* He may truly be ſaid to haue obtained a great victorie, that by obedience puts fetters vpon his owne iudgemēt; & binds his will in chaines, and retracts his body with all its inclinations from all noxious libertie, provoking and in a manier forcing it to the ſeruice of God, willingly and voluntarily ſubmitting himſelfe to the will of another.

3.

3. Other vertues are to be applyed to their ſeuerall obiects, but obedience gaines in all things, and makes the ſoule rich in all; on all occaſions, at all times, obedience makes the ſoule rich in merit. Behold, o Religious ſoules, the ſolide and short way to the perfection of a Religious ſtate.

4. Obedience doth in a manner aſſure vs of the will of God; for all that a Superiour lawfully cõmandeth, ought to be taken and receiued as if God had cõmanded it; for he hath ſaid *He that heareth you heareth me*: And ſuch is the goodneſſe of God, that he hath a particular care in the direction of Superiours, and permitteth nothing to be commanded, but for the good of the true obedient ſoule. Adde that Obedience to our Superiours, being a chiefe & eſſentiall point of Religion, when

God calles any one to Religion, he calles him to this Obedience, and doth manifeſt his will, that we should doe what our Superiours command vs.

5. Obedience doth free vs from all cares, or troubles, all things being prouided for vs by others, whether they be ſpirituall, or corporall, yea we diſcharge our ſelues of a great burden, and lay it vpon anothers shoulders; as hath beene ſaid before.

6. Obedience raiſeth a man aboue himſelfe; for by it one diſpoiles himſelfe of his proper will, and cloatheth himſelfe with the will of his Superiours; vnder whoſe commandement he liues; and in this manner going aboue himſelfe, may ſay with *S. Paul*, Gal. 2. *I liue now not I: but Chriſt liueth in me.*

7. Obedience is a ſacrifice much pleaſing

pleasing to God, yea better than sacrifice, witnesse the Prophet *Samuel.* 1. Reg. 15. *Better is obediẽce than victimes. S. Gregorie* giues the reason therof, saying; *By other vertues we giue our goods to God, by obedience we giue our selues.* Yea we offer all our actions, and with all our powers or faculties of our soule: not only the fruict, but also the tree.

8. Obediẽce makes our prayers acceptable to God; *If we obey to our Superiours*, saith S. *Gregorie*, *God will incline to our prayers.* And *S. Augustine* assureth vs, that God doth rather heare one prayer of the obediẽt, than tenne thousand of him that contemneth to obey. *God will doe the will of them, that feare and obey him.* Psal. 144.

9. By obedience we crucifie our proper will; Which *Cassian* thus describeth, when he saith, *The*

Wholelife of a Religious person doth shew the figure and forme of Christ hanging on the crosse, for as he was crucified, and could not at his pleasure moue his members, so the Religious haue their wils bounde and fastened to the Crosse, that is, to that which mortifieth the senses and flesh continually: and euen as he that hangs on the crosse, doth not attend, or care what is done before him, nor is sollicitous for to morrow, nor held with any desire of possessing any thing, and lastly, as yet breathing in body without care or cogitatiõ, is dead to all things; so it becomes a Religious person, not only to dye to vices, and concupiscence, but also to all things of this World, & to turne himselfe to the place, wherevnto hopes euery moment to come. Whence S. Bernard saith, He ought to be so alienated from the acts of this World, that he would as willingly heare those who dispraise him,

him, as those who praise him; nay he doth not heare the one nor the other because he is dead to all.

Lastly to omit many others, this Obedience ioyneth terrestriall to celestiall: it is the ladder whereby we mount vp to heauen: and the chariot on which Elias was carried vnto Paradise. It is a lesson, we haue receiued from our Sauiour: for he beganne his life in Obedience, liued alwayes in Obedience, which was his food, and at last dyed in Obedience, being obedient euen to death: which made S. *Bernard* to exclaime against vs, saying: *O proude ashes be ashamed; God doth humble himselfe, and thou exaltest thy selfe: God doth subiect himselfe to men, and thou endeauouring to rule ouer men, doest prefer thy selfe before thy author.* O let vs not poore silly wormes thinke much to be com-

manded, considering that we haue made a promise to God, of consecrating our will to him: especially since hee is so bountifull vnto vs, for amongst other rewards that he hath promised, one and that the chiefest is that God remaines in the obedient soule. Whence 1. *Iohn.* 4. *He that keepeth his Commandement, abideth in him, and he in him.* First he in him, by his Commandement. For the law, and lawgiuer, are in the subject that obeyes therto; according to *S. Iohn* 1. ep. 2. *The Word of God remaineth in vs.* 2. by loue, for he that keepeth the law loueth God, and is loued of God; whence he remaineth in him by loue and affection, & as the Apostle saith 1. Cor. 6. *He that cleaueth to our Lord is one spirit with him.*

3. The obedient remaines in God as his client; & God in him,

as

as a protectour, directour and gouernour. Whence the Psalmist saith, He that dwelleth (by Obedience) in the helpe of the highest, shall abide in the protection of the God of heauen. 4. God abideth in the obedient soule, as in his place, throne, temple and seat. Lastly God is in the iust, & Obedient substantially, communicating his substance, making them as *S. Peter* saith 1. ep. c. 1. *Partaker of the diuine nature by the gift of sanctifying grace.*

From what hath beene said, we may gather, that *S. Thomas* had good reason to say; that Obedience is the chiefest vow in Religion: because by it greater things are offered to God, for by the vow of pouertie, only exteriour things are offered: by the vow of chastitie the things of the body, but by Obedience the will

and ſoule: and from thence he concludeth, that this vow of Obedience makes a ſtate of Religion; which other vowes without it doe not; yea this vertue of Obedience, containes all the reſt; and all things in Religious Rules, haue reference therto.

QVEST. XV.

What are the conditions of true Obedience?

AMongſt other conditions that make Obedience meritorious and pleaſing to God, the firſt and principall is, that it be done by loue. For theſe two muſt goe coupled together. Whence the wiſe man ſaith, *Eccl.* 3. *The children of wiſdome, are the Church of the iuſt: and their nation, Obedience and loue*: that is, the diſciples,

ciples and ſtudious of wiſdome, to wit Religion, are the Church, that is, the company and congregation of the iuſt, who bring forth fruite of Obedience & loue, which will bring them to true wiſdome & perfection: theſe two will carrie the arke of their ſoules to the place of its reſt; figured by the two kine that were ordayned to carry backe the arke of our Lord. 1. Reg. 6. which goe on directly without turning to the right hand, or to the left; making them goe forward with vnceſſant paſe, neuer declining from the way they haue vndertaken, but following alwayes the way of Obedience founded in the loue of God, vntill they come to their beloued. Theſe two are the true ſignes of a Religious perſon, and cannot be well without each other. For Obedience it engen-

dred

dred by loue, and loue encreaſed by Obedience; and as we cannot cõſide of victorie without a Captaine, nor come ſafe to the hauen without a pilot, ſo without Obedience we cannot well fight againſt our ſpirituall enemies, nor euer paſſe the dangers of the ſea of this life; In like manner without charitie or loue it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; whence it is that from the loue of God Obedience hath its merit, thoſe that will haue the merit of Obedience, muſt obey to loue, and loue that they may obey the command, for the loue they beare to God. Obedience being joyned with loue, becomes perfect and eaſy. For as *S. Leo* ſaith *Obedience doth mollifie the command, and men doe not ſerue by neceſſitie, where that which is commanded, is loued.* Such a one was the Prophet Dauid *Pſal.* 118.

when

when he ſaid, *I meditated in thy Commandements which I loued.* On which place *S. Ambroſe* ſaith, *He did loue that he might willingly fulfull the law, for he that loueth willingly doth that which he is commanded.* I will conclude with the ſaying of *S. Bernard*, *Only charitie or loue makes Obedience gratefull and acceptable to God.*

2. The ſecond condition which alſo followeth from the precedent, is that Obedience ought to be prompt, without delay; ſuch was the Obedience of *Zacchæus S. Peter*, and *S. Andrew* who preſently obeyed the voice of our Sauiour. For the grace of the holy ghoſt acknowledgeth no ſlow delayes; whence *S. Bernard* ſaith *The faithfull obedient perſon knowes no delay, he flyes procraſtination, is ignorant of ſlowneſſe, preuents the commander, prepares his eyes to ſee,*

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his eares to heare, his tongue to ſpeake, his hand to worke, his feete to walke, and the whole man to receiue the will of him that commands him.

3. The obedient ought to be diligent in the performance of what is commanded, that he may ſay, *My heart is prepared o Lord, my heart is prepared*, to doe whatſoeuer is commanded: is alwayes prepared to obey, euen at the firſt ſigne, with all diligence to put it in execution; that as Eldras ſaith 1.l. c. 7. *All that appertayneth to the rite of the God of heauen, be giuen or done diligently, in the houſe of God; that is in Religion.*

4. This obedience ought to be ſimple, after the example of Abraham, who went forth out of his country at Gods command, nor knowing whither or how; for Religious perſons ought not to be ſollicitous how, or wherfore they

should doe the thing commãded, but according to *S. Hierome*, *Beliue that whatsoeuer the Superiour of the monasterie commandeth, is good: they are not to iudge of the sentence of their betters; their office is to obey and fulfill what they are commanded, Moyses saying heare ô Israel, and be silent.* *S. Gregorie* is of the same minde when he saith, *That he which hath perfectly learned to obey, knoweth not how to iudge.* And *S. Bernard* teacheth, that perfect Obedience principally in beginners is without discretion; that is to say doth not discerne what it is, nor wherfore it is commanded; but only endeauoureth that the thing commanded be done faithfully and humbly: for true Obedience consists in this, that we doe not sinisterly interpret the words of the precept, nor explicate and wrest it according

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to our ſenſe, or pleaſure, but receiue it ſimply, and execute it according to the will and intention of him that commands it. *Caſſianus* addes, that they muſt become as deafe not hearing, and as dumbe not opening their mouth, not diſcerning, nor iudging any thing that is commanded.

5. Obedience muſt be accompanyed with humilitie, wherof it is a branch, in this following the counſell of our Sauiour, Luc. 17. *When you ſhall haue done all things that are commanded you, ſay We are vnprofitable ſeruants, We haue done that which we ought to doe*; no more than what by your profeſſion is required of you, for by your profeſſion and ſtate, you owe full ſubiection & ſubmiſſion to God, and to man for God, for whoſe loue alone you haue thus humbled your ſelfe.

6.

6. Obedience ought to be joyfull: for nothing is more pleasing to God than joyfully to performe what is commanded; after the example of the Apostles, who as *S. Basill* saith, *Submitting their neckes to the yoake of Obedience, did goe forth into the publique places, with a joyfull mind, ready to suffer contumelies, lapidations, ignominies, crosses and diuers deaths.* And so a Religious man ought to performe his Obedience. *S. Bernard* much esteemed of such Obedience, because the cheerfull coũtenance & sweet words doe much adorne the Obedience of the Disciple.

7. Obedience doth all things willingly: for God requires a voluntarie sacrifice, such as Dauid made when he said Psal. 53. *I will voluntarily sacrifice vnto thee from a good heart and free will*: I will offer

offer ſacrifice vnto thee, and with a willing minde I will ſacrifice to thee whatſoeuer I ſhall thinke is pleaſing vnto thee, and ſuch was the Obedience of our bleſſed Sauiour; who did profeſſe Ioan. 4. that *His meate was to doe the will of him that ſent him.*

Laſtly to omit many others this Obedience muſt be perſeuering after the example of our Sauiour, who would not leaue this Obedience at any time, but carried it with him euen to his croſſe, and therfore we muſt perſeuer to the end, that we may reape the crowne of eternall glorie.

I omit here to ſpeake of the obligation that Religious haue to this Obedience: referring it as alſo the obligation of all other things in this Rule; to the laſt Chapter where I ſhall haue

better

better occasion to speake of the obligations of this Rule.

QVEST. XVI.

Whether the vow of Poucrty be necessary to a Religious state?

WEe must first suppose that Pouertie which Religious generally profesſe, is nothing elſe but a voluntarie forſaking of all proprietie or dominion: or as Portell will haue it: a renouncing of all things poſſeſſed, and of all right of poſſeſſing any thing made by a ſolemne vow, in an approued Religion, in the hands of a Prelate, or Superiour, hauing power to admit them: how neceſſarie this is to a Religious ſtate may be proued.

1. A Religious ſtate is an exercise

cerciſe of acquiring perfection, and to this each Religious ſeemes to be obliged; now through loue and affection of earthly things, the minde is or may be much hindred from obtaining perfection: for it is very hard to moderate the affection to them, as long as they are poſſeſſed.

2. Religious perſons ought to imitate the Apoſtles in the wayes of perfection: but the Apoſtles glorying in the fact, did ſay, *Behold we haue left all things and haue followed thee.* And our Sauiour for reward therof, doth promiſe *a hundred fold reward and that they ſhall poſſeſſe life euerlaſting.* Beſides the Apoſtle *S. Paul.* 1. Tim. 6. profeſſeth the ſame, ſaying, *Hauing food and wherwith to be couered, with theſe we are content.*

3. Our Sauiour, who was prototipe of all perfection, by word

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ard worke did teach this Euangelicall Pouertie, for of him selfe he saith, *The foxes haue holes, and the foules of the aire nests: but the Sonne of man hath not where to lay his head.* Mat. 8. This pouertie seemes to haue beene his patrimonie; In it he was borne, in it he liued, and dyed; and to all that seeke perfection he commendeth this pouertie; saying Mat. 19. *If thou wilt be perfect, goe and sell the things that thou hast, and giue to the poore; and thou shalt haue treasure in heauen, amd come follow me.*

4. The Apostle S. Paul, saith 2. Tim. 2. *No man being a souldier to God, intangleth himselfe with secular businesses*, It is a decree made, that all those who will be souldiers of Christ Iesus, must not intangle themselues with the affaires of this world, with riches and wealth, but must seeke in all things

things to pleaſe God. *S. Baſill* alluding to this, ſaith: *The ſouldier doth not build houſes, nor buy lands, he doth not giue himſelfe to marchãdiſe, he pitcheth his tent in the ſtreet, takes meats only through neceſsitie, his drinke is Water: no more ſleepe than what nature requires, often in journeys & watchings. His patience in ſuffering cold and heat is great, he often vndergoes dangerous combats with enemies.* Goe, ô ſouldier of *Chriſt Ieſus*, let the cogitations of euerlaſting things come into thy minde, propoſe vnto thy ſelfe a kind of life, that wants houſe, citie, and poſſeſſion of all things, and be thou ſeparated and freed from all cares of this life.

5. The ſame Apoſtle 1. Timot. 6. will giue vs another reaſon; ſaying. *They that will be made rich fall into tentation, & the ſnare*

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of the deuill, and many desires vnprofitable & hurtfull, which drowne men into destruction, and perdition, for the root of all euill is couetuousnesse. And on the contrary we may inferre; they that will be made poore, fall not into tentation, nor into the deuils snare, but haue many profitable and holsome desires, which exalt men vnto perfection, & saluation; for the root of all good is Pouerty or contempt of riches, and worldly wealth. Couetuousnesse seemes to shut the windowes of the celestiall Paradise, which Pouertie opens. If therfore we will seeke perfection we must imitate the Apostles, yea our Sauiour himselfe, & shew our selues true souldiers and Disciples of *Christ Iesus*, and avoid the manifold dangers that are in this world; we must embrace this Euangelicall

Pouertie ſo much commended by the Fathers and practiſed by all Religious; Let vs conclude with the words of our Sauiour Luc. 14. *Euery one that doth not renounce all that he poſſeſſeth, cannot be my Diſciple.* That is, to follow Euangelicall perfection; in which ſenſe the holy Fathers in all Ages haue thought this Pouertie neceſſarie to a Religious ſtate.

QVEST. XVII.

What this Pouerty is: and what is the profit thereof?

THe Pouerty here required, is not that miſery that proceeds againſt our wills, from want of meanes to liue on, an obiect rather of pitty, than any comendable ſtate: Nor onely Pouerty in affection, ſuch as may be had

with the poſſeſſion of riches, although this be meritorious in its kind, and practicable; but that abſolute & voluntary Pouerty both in affection and poſſeſſion, interiour and exteriour, both in ſpirit and body too, freely vndertaken for the loue of God, when temporall goods & poſſeſſions might either haue beene kept or beene gotten. And to this do Religious perſons oblige thẽſelues by vow, forſaking all worldly wealth as an impediment to that ſpirituall perfection they aſpire vnto, and that wholy and totally, not by peecemeales: really and in deed, not in affection onely, although ſome in a more ſtrict manner than others, according to their ſeuerall inſtitutions, The Councell of Trent permitting, nay requiring that all Religious houſes or Monaſteries (except the Franciſ-

cans that are Obſeruantines and Capucins, who poſſeſſe nothing) should haue goods and rents in common, as much at leaſt, as might conueniently maintaine them, although the particular Religious haue nothing proper. And of this we ſpeake here as commended vnto the Religious of this Order; and embraced by them in their vowes; the merit wherof is manifeſt; by the compariſon that the Fathers make of this Pouerty or forſaking of all things. Preferring it before all almes whatſoeuer. So S. Auguſtine ſaith. *It is good to diſtribute our wealth by giuing it to the poore, but it is better with intention to follow Chriſt, to giue altogether, and being freed from ſollicitude, to want with Chriſt.* S. Gregorie cópares the one to a ſacrifice, the other to a Holocauſt which con-

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ſumes all. S. Hierome writes a-gainſt Vigilantius, for that he did affirme that thoſe did better who vſe their goods by little and little, and diſtribute the fruict of their poſſeſſion to the poore; than thoſe who hauing ſold all their poſſeſſions at once, doe giue all: *I will not anſwer*, ſaith he, *to you but our Lord will: If thou wilt be perfect goe and ſell all things thou haſt, and giue to the poore.*

2. Pouertie engendreth humilitie, which is the foundation of ſanctitie; witneſſe our Seraphicall Father, who being demanded what did make vs moſt pleaſing to God: he anſwered, *Pouertie; for Pouertie is the way of ſaluation, the fountaine of humilitie, the roote of perfection, and from thence are manifold fruits although hidden and knowen to very few.*

3. The poore of ſpirit hauing

no other cares, doth only ſtudy to heape vp vertue, as the Bee doth hony. So *S. Antonie* free from the cupiditie of wealth, or worldly riches, had an vnſatiable deſire of vertue. Whence our holy Father in his firſt Rule ſaith, *This is the bright of moſt high Pouerty. which doth make yee, my deare Brethren, heires and Kings of the Kingdome of heauen; which doth make yee poore in ſubſtance, but exalted in vertue.*

4. It conſerues Charitie and peace, for it takes away that *Mine*, and *Thine*, from whence ariſe all ſtrifes, & contentions, as *S. Chryſoſtome* teacheth; wherfore it is, worthily called the *Mother of concord and vnitie*: for hardly there can ariſe any diſſenſion amongſt thoſe that embrace Pouertie alike.

5. It frees a man from many di-

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ſtractions, cares and ſollicitude; which riches on the contrary bring with them; wherfore *S. Chryſoſtome* calls it a *Tranquill hauen:* becauſe by it a man is freed from terrene deſires, and doth giue his minde to prayer and vertue, that they may ſay with the Pſalmiſt. Pſal. 72. *What is to me in heauen? & beſides thee (ô my God) what would I vpon earth?*

Laſtly to omit many other benefits of holy Pouertie, It bringeth with it a great reward, according to the teſtimonie of our Sauiour Mat. 5. *Bleſſed are the poore in ſpirit, for theirs is the Kingdome of heauen.* Which made *S. Bernard* on the feaſt of all Saints to make this exclamation. *Veritie which cannot be deceiued, nor deceiue doth ſpeake: Truth it ſelfe doth ſay, Bleſſed are the poore in ſpirit: and yet yee inſenſible chil-*

dren of Adam, doe seeke and desire riches, when now the beatitude of of the poore is diuinely commended and preached to the world and beliued by men. And what is this that the same promise is made to the poore, and to martyrs? vnlesse that voluntarie Pouertie be a kind of martyrdome, the Prophet saith Blessed is the man that goeth not after gold, nor hath hoped in the treasures of mony: who is this and we will praise him? for he hath done wonderfull things in his life; what more wonderfull or what more greiuous martyrdome, than to hunger in the midst of banquets; to freeze amongst many pretious garments; to be oppressed with want amongst riches, which the world offers vs, & the maligne enemie doth suggest vnto vs, and our naturall appetit desireth: shall he not be worthely crowned, that shall so fight? casting of

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the vaine promising World, deriding the tempting enemie, and what is more glorious, triumphing, ouer themselues, and crucifying their putrified concupiscence. Moreouer the Kingdome of heauen is in like manner promised to the poore, and to martyrs; because it is bought by Pouerty and in suffering for Christ is receiued without delay. S. Gregorie Nissen describing this Pouertie assures vs of the same reward, saying, *Wilt thou vnderstand: Who is poore of spirit? he who hath changed temporall wealth into a rich soule, who is in want for the spirit, who hath shaken and cast of earthly riches, as it were a burden, that he may be carried aloft in the aire, tending in a cloude together with God to celestiall things.* To conclude our Sauiour himselfe, declares. Mat. 19. this reward saying. *Euery one that hath left house &c.*

shall receiue a hundredfold and shall possesse life euerlasting. For as S. Ambrose saith, *he that leaueth all, begins to possesse God, he will be a perfect reward of vertues, not only by multiplication of a hundredfold, but by estimation of perfect vertue. Which is as much as to say, they possesse not only heauen, the earth, and all things that are therein, but also God himselfe, all honour, all riches, all glorie, sweetnesse, delights, ioy, and all good things in God, and with him all celestiall, immense, & eternall riches.* Wherfore Religious persons by the Vow of Pouertie, doe buy diuine riches; & and by forsaking their temporall goods, doe reape eternall: they become strangers on earth, but citizens of heauen, companions of Angels, and domestiques of almightie God.

QVEST.

QVEST. XVIII.

Whether it be good to make vowes of Chastitie? and whether it they be necessarie to a Religious state?

OVr Sauiour Mat. 19. approues of such vowes, saying *There are Eunuches which haue gelded themselues for the Kingdome of God.* Which S. Augustine and others vnderstand to be done, by the vow of Chastitie. And S. Paul 1. Tim. 5. saith. *She that is a widdow in deede and desolate; let her hope in God and continue in obsecrations, and prayer night and day.* By widdowes in deede *S. Chrysostome, S. Anselme,* & others; commonly doe vnderstand such as haue made vowes of Chastitie; which may also be

gathered, by the words following. *For she that is in delicioufneſſe is dead, and when they ſhalbe wanton in Chriſt, they will marry, hauing damnation, becauſe they haue made voide their firſt faith.* Loe by marrying they incurre damnation: not becauſe they married, for that was lawfull in it ſelfe, but becauſe they haue made void the faith, and promiſe made to God; for ſo the Fathers commonly interpret this place.

The ſame Apoſtle 1. Cor. 7. perſuades all Chriſtians therto; preferring Virginitie before matrimonie; for ſix reaſons, The Firſt is for the neceſſitie of this preſent time, which being ſhort, is giuen vnto vs, for to gaine, not temporall things, but ſpirituall & eternall, wherto the Virgin, or chaſt woman, doth altogether incline. For ſaith he. *I thinke it is*

good

good for the present necessitie, because it is good, for a man so to bee, and it is good for a man not to touch a women, for that our time is short in this world: we know not how neare we are to our end, and therfore it behooues vs to apply out minds to those things which are spirituall, and neglect the fading pleasures, and vanities of this world.

2. Because he that is married, is bound in a bond to is wife; but he that is single is free, not that the Apostle would condemne marriage; but that he might shew the benefit of Chastitie, for the chast person hath his freedome, and is not subiect to those toyles, and cares as married people commonly are; they therfore are more free, and at more liberie to serue God; whence S. *Augustine* compares wedlocke to *Martha* &

Chastitie

Chaſtitie to *Marie* ſaying *As it was good that Martha should be imployed, in the ſeruice of Saincts; but better that which Marie did, hearing the word of God; ſo alſo we praiſe the good of Suſanna in conjugall Chaſtitie, but we preferre the good of the widdow Anne before it & much more the good of the Virgin Marie.*

3. Becauſe chaſt perſons, want the tribulation of the fleſh; which doe follow marriage. *If a virgin marry* ſaith the Apoſtle, *she shall haue tribulation of the flesh.* Intimating that as the Poët ſaith, the more the waters of luſt are drunken, the more they are thirſted after; whereas Virginitie is ignorant of ſuch luſt, or at leaſt is not ſo eaſily drawne therto, which made S. Hierome to ſay, *Virginitie in this is eaſier, becauſe it doth not know the incentiues of the fleſh,*

and

and widdowhood in this is more carefull, because it remembreth past pleasures.

4. Because a virgin doth thinke how she may please God, but the married hath a diuided heart, taking care to please her husband: but the virgin hath nothing to care for, but to serue God; and therfore *Saint Hierome* saith *The spouse of Christ is the arke of the testament, gilded without, and within the keeper of the law of our Lord, as in that, there was no other thing, but the table of the testament: so let there be in thee (ô virgin) no extrinsecall cogitation, our Lord will sit vpon this propitiatorie as vpon a Cherubin our Lord will free thee from secular cares &c.*

5. Because a virgin is holy of body and spirit; married not so ordinarily; the virgin thinketh on the things, that pertaine to

our Lord, that she may be holy, in body, by Chastitie, and in spirit by the inhabitation of the holy Ghost.

6. Because single life doth giue facilitie of seruing our Lord, without impediment, were as marriage, hath a thousand impediments of deuotion, and pietie: Virginitie saith S. Hierome *doth make vs intentiuely to serue God without distractions.*

A continuation of the same subject out of the fathers and practise of the Church.

SAinct Augustine ep. 179. ad probam; much commendeth this Virginitie, saying, *Who can prosecute with worthy praise, how incomparable a thing it is, that Christ hath more women virgins, than the world Counsellers? and*

how

how excellent it is to transcend the course of time, by integritie of mind and body, where the virgin noble by race, and more noble by sanctitie, may the more rejoyce in that by diuine association, shee is to obtaine a more exceeding sublimitie in heauen, than if by humaine marriage she should haue brought forth noble children. For the Anicinean ofspring (that is the daughter of Anicean) hath most nobly chosen, by not knowing marriage, to make blessed her noble familie therby, than by childbearing to multiply it, in the flesh, rather to imitate the Angelicall life, than from her flesh to encrease the number of mortall men. S. Ambrose speaking of virginitie, saith That it is called from heauen, to be imitated on earth, and againe transcending aboue the clouds, aire, starres, and Angels: it did find, the word of God in the bosome of his Father.

Elias,

Elias, because he was neuer found to haue defiled his body by carnall pleasures, was carried in a fiery chariot to the heauens. S. Hierome addes that *whatsoeuer vertue thou hast, and, with what workes soeuer thou doest shine, if thou doest want the girdle of Chastitie, thou dost draw all things by the ground.* Great S. Gregorie to make the number of the foure Doctors must speake his verdit. *Virginitie* saith he, *is a flower, martyrdome is a flower, & good workes are flowers: Virginitie is in the Garden, Martyrdome in the field: and good workes in marriage.*

It resteth now to shew, that the vow of virginitie is good, and lawfull which notwithstanding followeth of what hath beene said; for if Virginitie or Chastitie is so pleasing to God, without doubt it is more pleasing, if it be done

done with a vow; which also S. Augustine confirmes, l. de Sanct. virg. c. 18. *Virginitie is not honoured because it is virginitie, but because it is consecrated to God, which although it be kept in the flesh yet it may be kept in Religion and deuotion of spirit; and by this the virginitie of the body is spirituall, which the continency of pietie doth vow & obserue.* And beneath he saith. *Amongst the goods of the minde continency is more honourably accounted, whereby the integritie of the flesh is vowed consecrated and obserued.* Abdias who liued in the time of the Apostles saith that *Trophima* disciple to S. Andrew did make to him a vow of Chastitie; the like he affirmeth of Iphigenia; to S. Bartholomew: Aurelian declareth that the daughter of S. Susan, did vow the same to S. Marcell, Nicephorus relateth that Pulcheria

Pulcheria did the like, what shall I ſtand longer in a thing ſo cleare, & already proued in the queſtion of vowes in generall.

But ſome perhaps will obiect againſt this by producing an argument as old as impious, which was alſo commune in the time of S. Hierome; and therfore it is no wonder that is ſo riffe: now in in theſe our corrupted times; wherein in the enemie hath ſo much preuailed againſt vertue; and many doe ſeeke to hinder ſoules from ſo great good, diſuading them from ſo good intentions; If all shut themſelues vp, and goe liue in Monaſteries, who shall frequent the Churches? who shall maintaine the Catholicke cauſe? who shall harbour Gods ſeruants? if all become virgins, there will be no mariage; and humaine kind should perish.

Wherto

Wherto I cannot better answer, than by the mouth of the same holy Doctor who saith. *Virginitie is a rare vertue not desired of many. But I would to God all were what a few are; of whom it is said many are called few are chosen: for then the prisons would be empty. It is better that your children should be in such places where they may purely serue God, than liue in danger to offend God, by their debauched manner of life. No man is condemned for want of virginitie, for no punishment forceth Chastitie; but Religion doth encrease it, and faith doth conserue it, therfore if any one thinke that by consecration of virgins, humaine kind is diminished; let him consider that where there are few virgins, there are also fewer men, where there are more frequent affections of virginitie, there also is a greater number of men. Learne or inquire*

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quire, how many are wont to be consecrated euery yeare in the Alexandrine, Orientall and Affrican Churches; fewer men doe come from thence than there are virgins consecrated, wherfore from the very vse of the whole World, virginity is not esteemed vnprofitable; especially when by virginitie saluation, doth come fruitfully to the Romane world. In the Orientall & Affricane Churchs, more virgins are consecrated than men are borne in Millaine, or in all Italie, whence notwithstanding humaine kind is not diminished, but multiplied, for God will not be ouercome in liberalitie, if the parents offer one or two of their children, he will put nine or tenne in their place, giuing fruitfullnesse, and happy childbearing, and replenishing their house with benediction. So he gaue to Anna for Samuel, whom she offered to God, fiue other children in his place.

Euen

Euen as he giueth to the rich, that giue almes, greater wealth, & greater fertilitie in their lands. The ſtudy of integritie is not hurtfull, nor new; let vs ſee if perhaps it may be iudged vnprofitable; for I haue heard many to ſay, that the world doth decay, humaine kind faileth; and marriages are deſtroyed: but I aske if any one hath ſought a wife, and hath not found one? When were there any warres for a virgin? who hath bene ſlaine by a virgin, but theſe things doe ariſe from wedlocke, thus *Saint Hierome* in ſeuerall places; whereto we may adde, that this argument makes againſt all ſort of qualities, for the like may be ſaid of clergie men: if all be clergy men, who ſhall goe to the warres, who ſhould pay the Kings rents, &c. If all be ſouldiers, or ſtates men, who ſhall plough the land? theſe are vaine conceits, ſuch is

the

the various nature of men, that there is a genius and inclination, to make vp the various & neceſſarie compoſition of this world. Our Sauiour ſaith *Not all take this word* Mat. 19. and the foreſaid *S. Hierome*, will tell vs, that we neede not feare, leaſt all be virgins: *virginitie is a hard thing, and therfore rare becauſe hard.*

Frō what hath beene ſaid doth appeare plainely the neceſſitie of Chaſtitie, in a Religious ſtate which tending to perfection, requireth the contēpt of all things, riches, wealth pleaſures, voluptuouſneſſe, and luſt: and on the contrary cannot ſtand without a freedome and liberty of the ſpirit, tending to God without impediments, which doe follow from this gift of Chaſtitie, as hath beene declared before.

Now becauſe that Encloſure

is a

is a principall meanes to conserue Chastitie: and that the Religious of this Order, doe in many places adde this Enclosure in the forme of their vow; I haue thought good to propound this Question here of Enclosure, although mention be made of Enclosure in the last Chapter of the Rule: where we will speake of its obligation.

QVEST. XIX.

Whether Enclosure be an ancient custome in the Church? and how conuenient for Religion?

S. Ambrose speaking of the women that stood at the doore of the Tẽple, saith, *We read that in the Tẽple at Hierusalem, were placed certaine virgins: but what doth the Apostle say? this did happen vnto*

 A declaration of the third

them in figure, that they might be signes of what was to come. And mẽtion is made in the Scripture of deuout women, that did ſerue god in remote places. *Exod.* 38. *&, Who as Rabby Abraham* ſaith, *had diſpiced the vanitie of the world: which vſe was more ſolemne after the burning of the Temple, as is manifeſt* 2. *Mac.* 3. *The women hauing their breſts girded with haire clothes, came together through the ſtreetes: yea & the virgins that were shut vp came forth to Onias.* And Luc. 2. Anna neuer departed *from the* tẽple. Of *Iudith* alſo, it is ſaid Iud. 8. *That in the higher part of her houſe she made her ſelfe a ſecret chamber, in which she abode shut vp with her maides.* But this as is ſaid before, was but a ſigne, or figure: let vs ſee, what is the vſe in the new law.

None cane doubt but that it

is now

is now practiſed through the whole Church, more or leſſe, in all Religious Orders; and that it hath bene the ancient cuſtome, will appeare by the teſtimonie of the Fathers, and authoritie of Councels. I will beginne with *Tertullian*. Who would haue the to *build a wall that they might neither ſee nor be ſeene*. And l. de vel. virg. *The cuſtome which doth shut vp virgins, in ſuch ſort, that being ignorant of exteriour things, they are only ſeene and knowne to God, of whom alone, they alſo would be ſeene, & loued; is the better law, & ought to be eſtabliſhed, conſerued, and maintained.* S. *Hierome* is more cleare in this point, concerning Religious Encloſure: in Reg. ad Euſtoc. *It ſhall not be lawfull for any of you, to goe forth, or to paſſe the limits of the Monaſterie and let this be your law, your Rule, and the ſum-*

 A declaration of the third marie or principall point of your life, and Profession: that when a Sister or Nunne shall once be entred the Monasterie, it shall not be lawfull thence forward to goe forth vnlesse vpon vrgent necessitie. And the first Counsell of Carthage held an 330. c. 3. commands it, and insinuats it to haue beene formerly commanded by the Councells of Hippon, Affrica, and others. The 6. Councell of Constantinople; hath done the same: but *Bonifacius* the 8. in the yeare 1194. made a generall Edict, commanding all Religious women, to obserue Enclosure, which afrerward the Councell of Trent; renewed & Pius. V. in a more ample manner declared; so that now all Religious women ought to liue enclosed, by the generall command of the Church, & many of them haue it inserted in their Rule as a

fourth vow, as these of this third Order haue, according as shalbe declared in the exposition of the last Chapter.

The holy Councell of Carthage, before cited, doth giue the reason of this Enclosure, that they might cut of the occasions of sinne, and take away all suspitions, of what the subtilitie of the Deuill, vnder the pretext of Charitie and loue, is wonted to entrappe vnwary or ignorant soules. To this we may adde that it is a peculiar meanes to conserue Chastitie, which they vow, and therfore many doe endeauour to shew that all Religious women are bound to it; although they should not vow it in particular, or haue any command of the Church, when it shalbe commanded by their lawfull Superiours; because they are bound to obey

in all things that belong to regugar obſeruance: as *S. Thomas* wel teacheth: which Roderiques alſo affirmeth of ſuch things as exceed the rigour of the Rule, prouided that it conduce to the more commodious obſeruance of the Rule. Such as Encloſure is; for as *S. Bernard* ſaith, *There is nothing that keepes Religious ſoules more in deuotion and makes them to perſeuer to the end, than to banish from themſelues wholy the world, not only in reſpect of habitation, by their actions and manner of life, but alſo in heart and affection*; can there be any more efficacious meanes to performe this, than by vowed Encloſure? whereby they ſeparate themſelues frō the whole world, being as dead to it in all affection, and deſire, and being on earth do leade a life, no more corporall, but ſpirituall: no more humaine,

but

but Angelicall.

Here they walke securely without danger: here they are as it were in the arke, freed from the waues of temptation, here they are shut vp in the arke of timber hewed by the axe of Obedience; which prepareth the soule for the seruice of God; the wood of the arke as some will haue it, was of Cedar which is incorruptible: these deuout soules for God doe enclose themselues, from corruption; and make cabbinets in their soules, to lay vp the spirituall treasure of vertues, and graces which God is wont to giue them; & in this arke is but one window in perfect simplicitie to contemplate God. They may wel be compared to the woman in the Apocalipse. cap 12. who with *two wings of an eagle did fly into the desart*, for they with two

wings of feare and loue; doe fly to places of ſolitude, by feare of offending God, and by loue of God himſelfe; they goe to the place of their ſecure aboade; they fly by feare, that they may take away all occaſions of offending God, & they fly by loue alwayes ſeeking God, ſoaring aloaft aboue terrene things. Others will haue theſe wings, to be deſire of Gods glorie, and the ſtudy of innocency; & holy life: certainely great muſt be their deſire of Gods glorie, and great their zeale of innocency and puritie of life, that makes them to withdraw themſelues from all humaine conſolation, and ſocietie. Of them we may well ſay that of the Prophet c. 40. *They hope in our Lord, and change their ſtrength, they haue taken wings as eagles, they runne & labour not, they walke and faint not.*

They

They by a more than feminine courage, doe so intirely forsake the world through great confidence in God; that they are changed renewed, and doe take new force of body, and minde; and with eagles wings, that is most swiftly, ascend to heauen, after that like eagles they haue liued, in the rocke of of Enclosure; and here on earth may truely, say, with the Apostle. *Our conuersation is in heauen.*

Saint Bernard saith, *They contemne to behold with the eies of the body, that which they haue reiected, from the eie of the spirit. For the world is so dead to them, and they to the world, as the Apostle saith, that no man can euer see them, on what occasion socuer: because that from their first entrance into Religion they haue their eies, and face all couered with a vaile which according*

to the cuſtome is giuen them, this is the shrowding sheet that they carry euen to death, for a memoriall and preparatiue to their holy death, as alſo their Encloſure is a liuing tombe or ſepulcher.

Finally Here is nothing to be found, but what ſauours of God; here thoſe deuout ſoules doe dayly feele celeſtiall delights; here they experience how ſweet and pleaſant a thing it is to be vacant to God in puritie of ſpirit; to be vnited to him in tranquillitie of mind; to be excerciſed in prayer, prayſes and contemplation of God: to recreate their minds with ſpirituall & pure conſolation; which taſted makes all vaine conſolations, all carnall pleaſures yea all things of this world, to become vnpleaſing and hatefull.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the Fasts.

THe Brothers, and Sisters, shall eat no flesh, on Mondayes, Wenesdayes, Fridayes, and Satterdayes: except Christmas day. And from all Saincts vnto Easter, they are to Fast on Wenesdayes, and Fridayes: As also on all Frydayes of the yeare. In like manner; They are to Fast euery day from the feast of S. Martin, vnto Christmas; as also all lent vntill Easter; which they shall beginne from Quin-

quageſima. On thoſe dayes wherein they Faſt not; they may eat only twiſe a day: except that from Eaſter, vnto the moneth of October: thoſe that labour in painfull and hard workes, may eat thriſe a day; the faſting dayes excepted neuertheleſſe Trauellers, Infirme, and weake perſons, in time of neceſſitie, may breake their Faſts.

EXPOSITION.

IN this Chapter, the times of Abſtinence Faſting and Temperance are ſet downe; and who are excuſed from Abſtinence, and Faſting.

The times of Faſting are, firſt all Fridayes

Fridayes throughout the yeare 2. all Wenesdayes from all Saincts-day to Easter. 3. the Rule sets downe two Lents, the first begins the next day after the feast of S. Martin the Bishop: and ends at Christmas. The second is the lent of the Church, only by the Rule, it begins the monday after shrouesunday.

The times of Abstinence, are all Mondayes, Wenesdayes, and Satterdayes, through the yeare. On Christmas day they may eat flesh whatsoeuer day it fals on.

They are not at any time to eat abouetwise a day, vnlesse their labour, Infirmitie or Weakenesse may excuse them.

QVEST.

QVESTION I.

What Abſtinence and Faſtings are? Wherfore they are ordained by the Rule?

ABſtinence is a ſpeciall vertue, ordayned for the moderation of the delights, that follow Gluttony: that according to the Order of reaſon, the flesh may be ſubiect to the ſpirit. So that Abſtinence may be ſaid to be the handmaid of Chaſtitie, which can neuer well ſtand without it. *Sainct Hieronc Epiſt 22. ad Euſtochium*, ſaith; *Wine and youth are a double incentiue of pleaſure: Why doe we adde oyle to the flame? Why doe we miniſter fuell to a burning body? Paul to Timothy, ſaith, now doe not drinke water: But vſe a little wine for thy ſtomack, and thy often infir-*

mities.

mities. See for what cause Wine-drinking is granted. And S. Augustine l. Quæst. ex vtr. Test. As a feauerish body if it take food, or drinke, doth become hotter, so humane bodies that are inflamed with bloud, doe burne more vehemently, vnlesse they be gouerned by Abstinence: it is the part of the mind to lead the body, but if it lets the body goe at randome, it will precipitate or cast downe the mind as a furious horse casteth downe his negligent or heedlesse rider, therfore Fasts are necessarie vnto vs, as medecine to wounds; for they giue medicine of eternall life; they mitigate the intemperance of the body, represse contrarie motions, and take away the ouerpressing of the soule as our Lord said Luc. 21. looke well to your selues, least perhaps your hearts be ouer charged with surfetting, and drunkennesse. S. Chrisostome well saw

ſaw the euill that followes ther-of; *He that liueth in delights and is giuen to drunkennesſe, and deuouring of flesh, and is often ouercome with drinking of wine, both againſt his will, and with his will, muſt needs ſinne.* Whence the Apoſtle S. Paul 1 Tim. 5. *She that is in delicicious neſſe, liuing is dead*; and to avoid this, the Apoſtle ſaith 1. Cor. 9. *I chaſtiſe my body, & bring it into ſeruitude, leſt perhaps when I haue preached to others, my ſelfe become a reprobate.* And accordingly S. Baſill Hom. 2. *Thou knowest that the flesh coueteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the flesh: wherfore ſince they are ſo aduerſe one to another, let vs ſubtract or withdraw pleaſure from the flesh, and encreaſe the ſtrength of the ſoule, that by faſting, hauing gathered force to ouercome the concupiſcence we may be adorned with the*

crowne

crownes prepared for Abſtinence.

From what hath beene ſaid, we may inferre, how convenient and neceſſarie it is, that Religious perſons ſhould excerciſe this vertue of Abſtinence, which is ſo neceſſarie an inſtrument for the due performance of their vow of Chaſtitie; and in this reſpect, all Religious Orders, all holy perſons, of what degree ſoeuer haue made vſe of this Abſtinence, or faſting; as eſteeming it in a manner impoſſible that perfect Chaſtitie, ſhould ſtand without it.

Beſides the foreſaid neceſſitie of abſtinence in Religion, we may find a congruitie: for it is certaine, that the diuell doth in a peculiar manner, ſeeke to hinder all Religious, and deuout perſons; and therfore they had neede to haue ſome armour againſt him; and what better than what our

Sauiour

Sauiour himſelfe hath preſcribed? to wit faſting: Mat. 22. whence S. Athanaſius, l. de virg. ſaith, *Doſt thou ſee what faſting doth? it healeth diſeaſes, dryeth vp diſtillations, putteth the diuell to flight, expelles bad thoughts, and makes the heart cleane.*

Doth it not become Religious perſons to doe pennance, aske pardon, and ſatisfie not only for their owne, but alſo for the ſinnes of others? and can they doe it better than by faſting, whence S. *Ambroſe What ſaluation can we haue vnleſſe we wash our ſinnes with faſting.* S. Auguſtine *We faſt for indulgence of our ſinnes, and for the diuine mercy.* Tertul. *As at firſt the vſe of meat, hath deſtroied vs, ſo now faſting may ſatisfie God.*

Laſtly it is the cheifeſt imployment of Religious perſons, to contemplate diuine things, and to offer

offer prayers to God: there is nothing that more conduceth to this, than fasting; Moises in fasting did talke with God and receiued the law; by fasting Elias saw God, on the mount Horeb: Daniel did fast three weekes, before he receiued the diuine reuelations: to omit infinit examples of the like kind; I will conclude with the words of *S. Chrisostome*. *Fasting* (saith hee) *is the food of our soules; it produceth in them light wings, that they may be carried on high, and may contemplate highest things: And that they may be higher than all pleasures, and all things that are sweet in this world. And euen as the lighter shipps doe passe more swiftly ouer the seas, and on the contrary, those that are loaded with much burden are drowned: so Fasting making the mind more light, causeth that it passeth more easily the*

sea

sea of this life, and beholdeth heauen, and those things that belong to heauen; who then can doubt, but that Abstinence, and Fasting are proper meanes, and instruments to conserue Chastitie, to obtaine perfection, and consequently doe properly belong to Religious persons, I would to God, that each Religious had that esteeme of Abstinence and fasting, as *S. Ambrose* had, who saith that, *Fasting is a celestiall substance and image. The refection of the soule, the food of the minde, the life of Angels, the death of sinne, the ruine of vice, the meanes of saluation, the root of grace, and the foundation of Chastitie.*

Note that I haue put both Abstinence, and fasting in the same question; because they differ only, in that Abstinence is more generall; for all fasting is Abstinence;

nence: but all Abſtinence is not faſting: at leaſt, as the words are now taken: for by the word *Faſting*, we vnderſtand a penall Abſtinence, or painfull Abſtinence; as to abſtaine from meat all day, or to eat one meale a day, according to the cuſtome of the Church, wheras Abſtinence is only taken, for the abſtayning from flesh, or from ſome peculiar meat; not out of ſuperſtition as that we thinke any meat vnlawfull, or vncleane after the manner of the Iewes; but for the intentions a foreſaid.

QVEST. II.

What are the times of Abſtinence?

THe times of Abſtinence ordayned by the Rule, are Mon-

Mondayes, Weneſdayes, and Satterdayes: on which dayes, the Religious of this Order, are not to eat flesh; and becauſe that ſome may aske, why they doe abſtaine more on thoſe dayes, than other, I will endeauour to ſatiſfie their curioſitie.

The firſt reaſon shalbe that our holy Father intended not to oblige thoſe of the third Order, with that rigour as the poore Clares doe obſerue this Abſtinence; to wit to faſt alwayes from flesh; but condiſcending to the diſpoſition, and conſtitution of humaine nature hath mixt ſome dayes of libertie, that they might be more able, to ſatisfie their obligation; which could not be done more conveniently, than by putting one day betweene another, as for example, on Sonday, they haue libertie to

eat

eat flesh, not on Monday: so on Tuesday, not on Wenesday; in the like mãner on Thursday, not on Friday, Saterday being an odde day: they are to abstaine, rather exceeding in Abstinence, and this hath bene alwayes obserued in this Order, and confirmed by diuers Popes.

The second reason is, because these dayes haue bene esteemed in all times as dayes more proper, for Fasting; and Abstinence; and such hath bene the practise of the Church, euen in the Apostles times. For Saint Clement l. 7. const Apost. maketh mention of fasting on Wenesdayes, and Frydayes: giuing the reason, because our Lord was sold on Wenesday, and did suffer on Friday. *Clement of Alexandria* and *Origen* affirme the same. So *Epiphanius*. In the 2. Councell of *Tours*, mention is made

made of fasting on Mondayes, Wenesdayes, and Fridayes; S. Augustine addes Saterday, Epist. 86. giuing the same reasons, for Wenesday and Friday, as aboue, and for Satterday; becausse Christs, body remained that day in the monument. Iuo Carnatensis will haue Satterday to be fasted; giuing this reason: For if we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord *Iesus Christ*, not only at Easter, but also euery weeke, we frequent the image of that day (to wit on Sonday) and on Friday we fast for the passion of our Lord, we ought not to let passe the Satterday, that seemes to be included betweene the sadnesse, and ioy of that time; for it is manifest that the Apostles in those two dayes, were in griefe and sorrow; and did hide themselues for feare of the Iewes; on which two dayes with-

out doubt they fasted, as the tradition of the Church teacheth vs, in that, Masse is not celebrated on those two dayes, to wit on good Friday, and holy Satterday.

We may adde the third reason; from the deuout custome of the Church, in diuiding the dayes of the weeke, for on Monday, ordinarily it prayeth for the dead; and so out of tender compassion of soules detained in Purgatory; deuout persons, & Religious soules, are to adde to their prayers also the fast, or Abstinence on that day: Tuesday is deuoted to the Angels; whose ioy makes vs to omit Fasting, to imploy our minds in the consideration of the celestiall joy. Wenesday is dedicated to the Apostles, whose whole life, was in Penance Fasting, Abstinence, and Mortification, and in imitation of them we

faſt, and abſtaine: beſides other acts of Mortification. Thurſday is ordayned to the honour of the bleſſed Sacrament: which is the food of our ſoules, wherto attending we omit the faſt of the body. Friday preſents vnto vs the Paſſion of our Sauiour, the memory wherof, makes vs expreſſe our compaſſionate griefe, by faſting; and chaſticing our bodyes. Satterday is conſecrated to our B. Lady; whom we contemplate all full of ſorrow, and bitterneſſe for the loſſe of her ſonne, and for anguish of mind, not taking food to reliefe her afflicted body; in whoſe imitation we faſt on Satterdayes. And prepare our ſelues for the better ſolemniſing of the Sonday; which preſents vnto vs the memorie of the Reſurrection of our Sauiour.

QVEST.

QVEST. III.

What are the times of Faſting?

FIrſt they are to faſt all Fridayes, throughout the yeare: and on Weneſdayes from All-Saints vntill Eaſter. And of theſe we haue ſpoken ſufficiently in the precedent queſtion.

Secondly they are to keepe two lents, to wit the lent of the Church immediatly before Eaſter: which they are to beginne on Quinquageſima Sunday or Shroueſunday. And 40. dayes before Chriſtmas day, to wit from the feaſt S. Martin. Of each of them ſeverally.

The Faſt of lent was ordained by the Apoſtles: As witneſſeth S. Clement l. 5. c. 13. conſt. A-

poſt. S. Ignatius the martyr. S. Irenæus. S. Hierome epiſt. ad Marcell. And many others; ſome calling it an Apoſtolicall Tradition, obſerued in all ages; in imitation of our Sauiour, who faſted 40. dayes; that we might prepare our ſelues, worthely for the joyfull celebration of the holy Feaſt of Eaſter. Moreouer this faſt is ordayned, that by it we might ſatisfie by penance, the faults & negligences of the whole yeare; by giuing as it were the tithe of our time, for the 10. part of a yeare is 36. dayes. where vnto is added 4. other dayes; to make vp the miſticall number of 40. which *Saint Hierome* calls a *Number of penance*. Other call it a *Number of affliction*, becauſe that Gen. 7. it rayned forty dayes, & becauſe our ſinnes haue prouoked the wrath of our God; we faſt

fast and pray 40. dayes. These are the dayes of fast commanded by God to the Prophet *Ezechiel* c. 4. To the Ninivites declared by the Prophet *Ionas*. These are the dayes that were consecrated by Moises and Elias, and last of all, by our Sauiour himselfe.

But why doe the Religious of this Order adde 2. or three dayes, to this Number? It seemes to me, that they doe not adde this as making it part of their lent; but for other reasons, and motiues: they fast these dayes as many Religious doe beginne their fast; at Septuagesima, which begins the penitentiall time, neither is this a new thing for c. statuimus dist. 4. Clergy men are commanded to fast 7. weekes before Easter because as the life of clergy men, is different from the conversation of the laitie; so there should be a

difference in their fasting; the like is ordayned c. denique dist. 4. S. Gregorie giues the reason, because Ecclesiasticall persons, especially if they be Religious, are to pray for the people; neither can they euer doe it with more necessitie; when through the greedy desire of the flesh; they wallow in riotousnesse and lust: whilst therfore they take their pleasure, and satiate their greedy desire, the poore Religious tend to their prayers, mortifying their Bodyes, by Fasting and Abstinence.

As for the fast of S. Martin, commonly called Saint Martins Lent, or the Aduent Lent, taking its denomination from the principall part of Advent, which by the common vse of the Church, is esteemed a time of Penance; and was anciently fasted,

as is

as is to be seene c. consilium de obser. Festorum: to prepare our selues, for the comming of our Sauiour; and with more deuotion to celebrate the feast of his Natiuitie. Now to make this time more compleat it is ordayned that the Religious of this Order should beginne this fast, from Sainct Martins day; which makes the compleat number of 40. dayes; which as I said before is a Number of Penance, aggreeing with the penitentiall life, that the Religious of this Order doe professe. We may finde also this Lent of S. Martins, ordayned in the second Councell of Toures, and others.

QVEST. IV.

Whether they are to fast on Christmas day?

OVr holy Father hath excepted this feast of the Natiuitie of our Sauiour, from any obligation of Abstinence, or Fasting; as may be gathered both by the expresse words of the Rule, as also by his answere; which he made to some that demanded him this Question; whether one ought to fast on Friday, whē Christmas day falles on it? the holy Father replied (as father Luke Wadding in his Annales an. 1215. declareth) *I thinke not only men may eat flesh that day; but also if the walles could eat, I would administer flesh vnto them; and annoint the walles with flesh on that*

that day, in which the Word made flesh, was borne to vs; and to the saluation of the world: yea I would desire that the Kings, and Princes should cast flesh and wheat into the high wayes; that the beasts of the field, and the birds of heauen, might haue wherewithall abundantly to satisfie their necessities; and after their manner might shout out for joy, in this so festiuall a day.

Moreouer such is the custome of the Church, commanded also by the first Councell of Braccara. Which also may be confirmed by this reason: for if it hath bene decreed by diuers Councells, that none should fast on sundaye, and some of the Fathers haue esteemed it rather a fault, than a vertue: as S. Ignatius Martyr, and S. Clement, and this in the memorie of Christs Resurrection: by much more

reason they ought not to fast, on this day; but solemnise it with joy and exultation. Vnlesse any one hath made a vow to fast on Sundayes or Christmas day, or that such be the custome of some Religious Order; which I doe not deny; but only shew how how congruously our holy Father hath ordained this clause.

QVEST. V.

What Temperance is required by the Rule?

HAuing spoken of Abstinence & Fasting, we must adde a word or two of Temperance, which is required of the Professours of this Rule, which to doe; it is convenient that we shew, what Temperance is, and what is the profit therof.

As

As for the first S. Thomas defines it, to be a *Vertue whereby a man can moderate all things that are contrarie to Reason*, and this is one of the foure Cardinall vertues; and is here defined in its generall signification; but if we take it in a more particular manner more proper to our Purpose. *Temperance is a moderation of the sensitiue appetite, according to the Rule of reason*: especially those which are commune to Man and Beasts; as in eating or drinking; and such like; to wit, that they doe not exceed in multiplicitie, or in daintinesse, for as Clemens of Alexandria saith, *It is not naturall to the body, that it be sustained with the much varietie of meates; for on the contrary, those that eat most the poorest meates, are stronger, more healthfull, and more actiue.* And againe. *It were good to abstaine, but*

if any one doth take food, he doth not offend, if he takes it moderately and temperately. And *Sainct Augustine* saith; *It is proper to Christians, to moderate the vse of food, according to necessitie and time.* If it be proper for Christians, much more for Religious persons, to whom Iustin the Martyr giues this Rule: *Food is to be taken, not for pleasure, but that in liuing, we may be profitable to something: If any want befall vs, let vs be content with poore things*: which is the same with that of *S. Paule* Rom. 13. *Make not prouisions for the flesh in concupiscence, to satisfie the desire of the flesh; but to supply necessitie*: let vs heare what deuout *S. Bernard* will say to this purpose. *Whence is this miserable abiection? that the noble creature, capable of eternall beatitude, and glory of our great God; as being made by his inspiration,*

marked

marked with his similitude, redeemed with his bloud, endowed with faith, adopted in spirit, is not ashamed to lead a miserable seruitude; vnder this rottēnesse of our corporall senses, and to take care of the flesh, to fatten and cherish the putrifying carkasse, which in short time without all doubt, is to become the meat of wormes? So that in pampering of the flesh, we doe but prepare more copious meat for wormes. And therfore our holy Father would haue that his children, should at all times vse a temperance and moderation in eating and drinking; allowing them only to eat two meales, condescending to their necessities & taking away superfluities.

QVEST.

QVEST. VI.

In What cases the Religious are excused from Fasting Abstinence? &c.

ALl Authors agree, that Labour, Trauell, Infirmitie, & weakeneſſe, are ſufficient reaſons to excuſe any one from the obligation of Faſting: and vnder theſe may be comprehended all other, beſides that of Diſpenſation. Wheof we ſhall ſpeake in the 4. Chapter; I will omit the more prolix declaration of them to the Caſuiſts; and only ſpeake of them in Order to Religious Monaſteries.

1. Vnder the name of labour is contained any painfull worke, that is neceſſary for the Communitie, either ſpirituall or corpo-

rall; as going to the Quire, saying the Diuine Office, Meditations, helping the sicke, washing, or any labour that may preiudice the health. For the Church doth not intend to oblige vs by its precepts, to any thing that may be a hindrance to a greater good; or to the preiudice of our health; the same we may say of the Rule; and therfore in case that any Religious cannot without danger of their health, performe such labours; they are not obliged to Fast: but may lawfully take such food, and as often, as it shalbe necessary for them.

2. Vnder the name Trauell, are contayned all iourneyes, pilgrimages, or such like; which I neede not explicate because the intention of this worke is only to set downe what concernes the Religious women, in this Order, who

who are encloſed. Notwithſtanding the Reader may note that this Rule is made aſwell for Religious men, as women, now the men, as other Mēdicants, may goe iourneyes to preach, and teach, and on other occaſions: & ſuch alſo are excuſed; the like may be ſaid alſo of the Religious women if vpon occaſions which shalbe mentioned in the explication of the laſt Chapter; they chance to leaue the Monaſteries, where they did liue, then they are alſo excuſed from Faſting, eſpecially when the iourney is any thing long.

3. Vnder the name of Infirmitie, is vnderſtood not only mortall diſeaſes; but alſo all ſuch diſeaſes, which by Faſting would encreaſe, or continue them; in which caſes none is oblige to Faſt.

4. Vnder the name of weakeneſſe,

neſſe, is comprehended all manner of debilitie; that may hinder either their naturall diſgeſtion, or make them vncapable to doe thoſe things that their ſtate requires; from whence we inferre, that thoſe who abound with ill humours, which hinder diſgeſtion, or haue a naturall weakeneſſe in diſgeſtion, are not obliged to faſt, nor ſuch, as from any precedent ſickneſſe, haue contracted any great weakeneſſe, the ſame alſo may be ſaide of thoſe that haue ſuch weake complexions, that when the ſtomacke is empty, they haue headaches, or cannot ſleepe, or ſuch like; for in ſuch caſes, they are not obliged to Faſt, nay it were better to take neceſſarie food, either in quantitie, qualitie, or time as the Phiſition, or dayly experience ſhall teach them.

To

To this we may adde those that are not aboue 21. yeare old, and those that are aboue 60. for such by the precept of the Church are not bound to fast: the reason is because the first are then in their growing, which being hindred by fasting, they might become weake and vnable to vndergoe the burdens of Religion; & the second; because their vitall forces begin to decay, and what food they take is scarce sufficient to maintaine nature. Lastly Dispensation excuses frō fasting. But of this more in the 4. Chapter.

But some will aske how much they may take for Collation? wherto I answere, that each Religion ought to follow the custome of their Order but they are obliged only to the custome of the Country wherein they liue.

Some other perhaps will demande

mande what they should doe if vpon ſome occaſion, they be called, or commãded from the table, on a faſting day, in the middle of dinner, or before they haue eaten ſufficient for to ſatisfie their neceſſitie? I anſwere that if they goe forth and chance to come in againe before the reſt are riſen, or within a quarter of an houre after, they may lawfully make an end of their meale, whether they had an intention to doe it or not; for this makes nothing to the accomplishing of the precept. Secondly if they haue not taken ſufficient to ſatisfie their neceſſitie; they may at any time, take it without any ſcruple; for the Faſts are ordayned rather to take away ſuperfluitie; than to hinder any one from what is neceſſarie.

To conclude this Chapter: it is lawfull to take any vſuall

Drincke

Drincke at any time of the day, vpon any Fasting day, for that no way is forbidden by the Church.

CHAP. IV.

Of Silence, Sermons, diuine Office, and other things tending to Perfection.

THe Brothers & Sisters must keepe silence in the Church, especially whē Masse is celebrated; or the Word of God propounded. But in other places, let them keepe, what by their Superiours shalbe ordayned concerning it. They ought also dayly

dayly in the euening, betweene themselues & God, to thinke what they haue done, or said, or thought: And euery day (if they can commodiously) they ought to heare Masse. And they must procure to haue some Religious man, who on certaine dayes may propose to them the word of God; and induce them to Penance & vertues. And he or shee or they, who by themselues doe know how to say the Canonicall Houres: ought to performe the Canonicall houres, according to the vse of the Romane Church: But those that doe not know how

how to say the Canonicall Houres, may say twelue *Paters Noſters*, for Mattins; and for euery one of the Houres, ſeauen, adding *Gloria Patri*, at the end of euery *Pater Noſter*: adding alſo *Credo*, and *Miſerere mei Deus*, in the beginning of Prime and Compline. If they doe not ſay the Houres in due time, let them ſay 3. *Paters* for Penance. And as often as they eat Dinner or meate; they ought to giue thankes to God. But of Sacramentall Confeſſion & receiuing the ſacred Communion, they ſhall keepe the ordination of Pope Nicholas the IV.

that

that thrice in the yeare, they confesse and communicate, or else obserue the statutes of their Superiours here vpon ordayned.

EXPOSITION.

IN this Chapter are contayned very many things tending to the good of Religion.

1. Silence is commanded in the Church, especially in the time of Masse or Sermon.

2. Silence in other places, is to be obserued according to the ordinance of Superiours.

3. The examine of the conscience at night.

4. They must heare Masse euery day.

5. They are to haue a Religious man sometimes to preach vnto them.

6. The

6. The subiect of their Sermons ought to be of Penance and vertues.

7. The Quire Sisters are to say the Canonicall Houres euery day.

8. The Lay Sisters, or those that cannot say the Canonicall Houres, are to say the Paters Nosters in steede it.

9. A Pennance of 3. Paters Nosters is set downe, for those that doe not say the office in due time.

10. They are to giue thankes before and after meat.

11. The Rule sets downe the times of Confession and Communion.

12. The Rule leaues the Religious to the statutes, made by their Superiours; for the more often confessing and communicating.

QVEST.

QVESTION I.

Wherfore the Religious keepe Silence?

I cannot better declare the neceſſitie of this Silence, than by ſetting downe the euill, that is oppoſite vnto it; which the wiſe man doth declare in a few words. Eccli. 20. *He that vſeth many words ſhall hurt his owne ſoule; for in much talke there ſhall not want ſinne.* Which proceeds 1. from the vnſtabilitie of the tongue, which paſſeth from neceſſarie words, to ſuperfluous: from ptofitable, to idle; from true, to falſe; from ſweet & pleaſing, to angry and brawling. 2. as S. Ambroſe ſaith, *In much talke, the Speech that goeth forth, is no*

way examined, or considered; S. Gregorie giues a 3. Reason: *Because that with how many words the minde is dissipated from the law or Rule of Silence; by so many streames, it is carried out of it selfe, and so cannot easily returne to its selfe.* The same Father will giue the 4. Reason, *Because Those that talke much, doe discouer themselues wholy to the darts of the Enemie; that lyes in ambush to destroy them*: so that he who cannot containe his spirit from talking, is as a City lying open to its enemie. *S. Dorotheus* will giue the 5. Reason, saying, that *Much talke extinguisheth in the heart, the rationall and cælestiall cogitations*; and to omit many other euils that comes from the tongue, I will conclude with the words of Sainct Iames c. 3. *The tongue is a fire, a whole world of iniquitie.*

Now

Now on the contrarie; great is the benefit of Silence: as continuall experience in all well-gouerned Monasteries doth manifest; and the learned Cardinall Turrecremata; assignes 12. fruicts therof. 1. it shunnes & avoides all the offences, that arise from ouer mnch speech. 2. it avoides all scandals and dangers of dissention, wherein talkatiue persons doe often fall. 3. it is convenient for the state of Disciples, such as Religious are, to be silent, that they may be the better versed in the schoole of vertue. 4. it maketh much to the perfectiō of the minde. 5. It worketh to the veritie of Religion, which without it, is reputed as vaine. 6. It strengtheneth the minde whilst it shuts vp its gates against the enemies. 7. It conserueth peace with those with whom we liue: which

is very neceſſary for Religious cloiſters. 8. It prepares the mind to contemplation. 9. It conſerueth feruour of Deuotion. Laſtly It is a ſigne of a prudent and wiſe perſon.

Sainct Iohn Climacus ſaith, that, *Taciturnitie is the mother of Prayer: the recalling from Captiuitie, the keeping of the fire of diuine loue, a diligent guard of the thoughts, a watch againſt the Enemies, a priſon of mourning, a louer of teares and which worketh the memory of death &c.* And in another place he ſaith. *The louer of Silence approacheth neere vnto God, and ſeruing him dayly in the ſecret of his heart is illuminated by him. S. Arſenius* was wont to ſay that *Three things were neceſſarie to a deuout ſoule: Fugere, tacere, & quieſcere. To fly away from occaſions of euill, to keepe Silence, and to reſt in peace.*

Seneca,

Seneca, ſaith, that nothing doth ſo much profit the minde, as to be inquiet, and to ſpeake little to any one; but much with our ſelues; & in another place ſpeaking to one of his ſchollers he ſaith. *This shalbe the ſumme of ſummes to thee. I command thee to be ſlow in ſpeaking.*

I will end this Queſtion with the words of learned Gerſon. Who ſaith that the Founders of Religious Orders, cõſidering the mainfold perill that hangeth ouer the ſoule, by the vices of the tongue, haue moſt prouidently ordained, for a ſoueraigne remedie; that their followers should continually keepe Silence; according to time and place. And continuall experiẽce teacheth vs that where the Rules of Silence are more ſtrictly obſerued; there Religion doth more perfectly florish.

QVEST. II.

What are the times of Silence ordained in this Order?

THe Rule expreſſely preſcribes no other place or time of Silence; but the Church, and diuine Office: leauing other places and times of Silence to the ordination of Superiours: So that whatſoeuer they shall ordaine herein, is virtually contained in the Rule; wherfore I will not only ſet downe what is in the Rule mentioned, but alſo the others ordayned by the lawfull Superiours of this Order; in our English Prouince.

I find in their Statutes, that they are to keepe Silence alwayes in the Quire, Cloyſter, Dorter, Kitchin,

Kitchin, Refectorie, worke house, and Calefactorie or place of fire. They are also to keepe strict Silence, from *Angelus Domini*. At night, vntill after Masse, the next day. The Places of Silence are the same that S. Bonaventure hath set downe for the Friars, of our first Order and what the Religious women of the second Order haue expressely inserted in their Rule; giuen vnto them by our holy Father S. Francis, and which Pope Innocent hath ordayned for all Religious Orders, the reasons I will briefely set downe. For each one in particular.

Silence is to be obserued in the Church, for the reverence and sanctitie of the place, which as S. Chrisostome saith, *Is the place of Angels, the seat of Archangels, the court of heauen, heauen it selfe*. And in another place saith *That noth-*

ing is more congruous for the Church than Silence S. Nilus; would haue vs to frequent the Church, no otherwise than heauen it selfe: not speaking, nor thinking any terrene thing therein. The Heathens themselues will confound vs in this point; of whom *Quintilian* saith. *In the Church we spare words, we compose our soules, and keepe our minde in Silence.* Verely it is a great abuse; as S. Chrisostome teacheth; that there should be greater Silence, on the theater or stage; where it is not commanded: than in the Church where it is commanded.

In the Dorter they are to obserue Silence at all times, to avoid distractions, that might arise therby to others: who perhaps would be at their deuotions, for *Our cell* as *S. Bernard* saith; *ought to be our heauen, our place of solitude, and retirement;*

tirement; and therfore both for the good of our owne ſoules, and for the avoiding of occaſions, whereby we may hinder others: ſilence is ſtrictly to be obſerued; and to that end, moſt commonly on the entry of the Dorter, there is written in great letters, *Silence*; and this is obſerued very punctually in moſt religious Orders.

In like manner all are to obſerue ſilence in the Refectorie; which hath bene alſo the cuſtome of all Orders; and that for diuers reaſons: I will ſet downe foure. 1. That the louers of Perfection, may ſooner diſpatch themſelues from ſuch places; which ought to be only of neceſſitie, and not of pleaſure; eſteeming it a ſeruile thing, to be ſo long in ſuch an action, that is commune to beaſts. 2. That they might avoid that gluttonous delight, which

ſome doe take in eating; for one bit to talke three words, the rather to ſatisfie their luſt. 3. Leaſt they ſhould hinder the profit, that they might make in hearing the reading at the table; for it is, and hath bene the cuſtome in all religious Orders, alwayes whilſt they are eating, to haue ſome one to read ſome pious booke. Laſtly that the tongue may be bridled, for oftentimes in banquets and drinking, there is great detractiõ; whence *S. Gregorie* is of the opinion, that the rich man in the Goſpell, was punished for his loquacitie at the table, the like may be ſaid of the kitchin in ſome reſpects, and therfore this is alſo eſteemed a place of Silence.

As for the worke-houſe; it ſeemes alſo neceſſary; becauſe Religious perſons ought to looſe no time, but to make their profit of

all

all occasions; and by pure intentions to make their workes meritorious, and pleasing to God. *S. Pachomius*, hath in his Rule. *Those who worke should not speake any worldly thing, but either meditate holy things, or be silent. Saint Isodore* saith that most commonly they had some one to read; that by some pious subiect presented, they might raise their soules to celestiall things. To omit others in this kind *S. Laurence Iustinian* would haue it to be done, that the mind may be occupied in holy cogitations, whilst the corporall worke is done, that together they may offer a gratfull holocaust of heart, and body. True deuotion will find admirable and secret intentions; to make their spirituall profit on all occasions: which multiplicitie of words would hinder; the like may be said of

all other labours.

It hath also bene the practise of all Religious Communities, to obserue strict Silence at the fire; for as *S. Bonaventure* saith *It is vsuall for the enemie to seduce men at the fire*; the king *Ioachim* despiced our Lord, and *Peter* denied his Master, as they were warming themselues by the fire. Besides the talking at the fire, makes them to stay longer, to the hindrance of others, and losse of their owne time; which ought to be very pretious to all Religious persons.

In the night time before they goe to bed, being to retire themselues from all things, and as it were to dispose themselues to the graue; each one ought to obserue Silence; and if it hath bene convenient that Silence should be alwayes kept in the Dorter,

much

much more at night, when they might alſo trouble the Communitie; wherof ſome may be ſicke or weake, euery one in a Communitie should conſider others neceſſities, as their owne. As for the morning vntill after the firſt Maſſe, who can doubt but that of all other times there is none more conuenient; yea in a manner neceſſarie for a ſoule that ſeekes God; for then they are to prepare their ſoules to God, and to preuent euill thoughts, that the enemie might put in their minds: & laſtly to prepare themſelues to the diuine ſeruice. For theſe and other reaſons in all ages this time of Silence hath bene moſt ſtrictly obſerued.

QVEST.

QVEST. III.

What is the examine of the Conſcience; and when it is to be made?

SIth this point is obuious to all; I will only briefely runne ouer it, in as much as may ſerue for the expoſitiõ of the Rule, & beginne with its definition. *Examine of the Conſcience is nothing elſe, but a diligent enquirie and diſcuſsion of our thoughts, words, and deeds, whether they be done well or ill:* if well; to giue thankes to the inſpirer of all good Gifts, and to make good purpoſes to perſeuer therein: If ill; to be ſorrow for them, with purpoſe of amendemẽt. Which in a few words is declared by the Prophet Ieremie. Lam 3. *Let vs ſearch our wayes, and ſeeke and returne*

turne to our Lord.

Many are the benefits of this examine, I will content my ſelfe with ſome few; leauing the reſt to others, that haue writt more copiouſly of this ſubiect.

Firſt thereby we are prouoked to compunction, and ſorrow for our ſinnes, wheras the neglect therof, cauſeth a careleſneſſe and negligence.

2. From this ſerious conſideration of our ſinnes, there ariſeth a deteſtation of ſinne: for who is ſo obdurate, that will not relent, when he conſidereth that he hath offended ſo louing a God; and hate that, which may any way depriue him of ſo great a good.

3. This doth raiſe the minde to to the practiſe of vertue, & makes one more carefull to avoid all occaſions of ſinne.

4. By this excerciſe, one be-

commeth

commeth more carefull of his actions, and more circumspect of what he is to doe, on such like occasions.

5. By this meanes one may more prudently consider the danger that we liue in, and more easily perceiue the treacheries and deceits of the Diueil, who for want of this diligence, doth entrappe vs before we are aware.

Lastly from the consideration of our sinnes, one striueth by all meanes possible, to raise acts of contrition, to the end that going as it were to our graue, we may reconcile our selues to God; in the best manner we can; and so be prepared to meet with death it selfe, if suddainely it should take vs away; as it hath done many millions.

Now omitting many other reasons, I haue thought good, for the

the comfort of Religious persons, to set downe a briefe forme of examining the Conscience, either at night or other times.

They may devide this examine into 8. parts. The first is concerning the diuine Office, as of its Omission Anticipation, Dilation, Festination Replication. Of want of Attention, due Preparation, Reuerence, Gravitie, Humilitie, Deuotion, fervour and such like.

2. *Concerning Obedience, as whether they haue obeyed their Superiours, humbly, joyfully, willingly, Simply, and promptly in all things, that are according to God and their Rule.*

3. *Concerning their time, as whether they haue spent it in Idlenesse, in vnprofitable and vnfruitfull employmẽt, especially the time of prayer, and deuotion: or whether they haue done so much good, as they might haue*

haue done in that time.

4. Of Ingratitude towards God, our B Lady, our Good Angels and Saints that are, Patrons in Religion, or place, where we liue: as also of our country; towards our Parents, or Friends, either spirituall or temporall; whether we haue bene thankefull for the benefits receiued, as for our Food, Health, Integritie of senses, our Creation, Redemption, Conseruation, Gubernation, Vocation, Custodie of Angels, Holy Inspirations, good Examples, Sacraments, place, time, company, and occasions of doing well; and Preseruation from euills, temporall, spirituall, and eternall.

5. Concerning sinnes of Omission as whether they haue neglected good desires and motions, in vocall or mentall Prayer. Haue forgotten to pray for their Benefactors, and Friends, haue had displicence of

their

their ſinnes with purpoſe of amende-ment. Whether they haue performed the Penances enioyned in Confeſſion or Chapter, whether they haue bene negligent in the acts of the Communitie, and other obſeruances of Religion.

6. Cõcerning ſinnes of the Thoughts; as of Pride, Preſumption, Vaine Glorie, Ambition, Contempt of others, Rash Iudgements, Suſpitions, Anger, Impatience, Sadneſſe or ſuch like Paſſions: of Carnall thoughts, of vaine Cogitations concerning our Parents, Country, or any other ſecular things, of terrene affections.

7. Concerning the Sinnes of the Mouth, of Breaking Silence, Idle words, Detractions, Murmurations, Boaſtings, Diſſimulations, Contentions, laughing, deriding, or ſuch like.

Laſtly Concerning our wordes; as of impure motions, and actions, of

bearing

 A declaration of the third hearing beholding, or discoursing on vnsecmely things. Of excesse in eating, and drinking, ouer greedily, curiously, attentiuely, hastily, desiring better things, neglecting the reading; of evill Examples giuen to their Companions and seculars. Of Irreverence towards God, Church Altar, Sacraments, Superiours, Confessours and such like; in any thing that is concerning the obseruance of their Rule,

Where we may note that the Rule prescribes this examine to be done at night; which is the most convenient time, not excluding the doing of it either in the morning, or any other time. S. Basill and S. Augustine haue ordained this examine of the Conscience at night, in their Rules, as the Reader by perusing of the saie Rules, may see.

QVEST.

QVEST. IV.

Whether they are to heare Masse dayly?

ALthough few spirituall Persons, are faultie in this point, yet for better explication of the Rule, I will briefely shew what is meant by this clause and afterward, the benefit of hearing Masse.

As for the first they are dayly to heare Masse; is to be vnderstood of the Conventual Masse; which in all orders is to be obserued; either by commandement of their Rules, as in the Carmelites, order: or by their statutes, which is both commendable and meritorious, and seemes to be a precept of the Church; in cap. *cum creatura. de celeb. Missarum.* And in other

other places: but omitting this I will goe to the ſecond point.

1. By hearing Maſſe they excerciſe an act of Religious worship to God, & in a manner doe make a Sacrifice to him, for they offer a Spirituall ſacrifice and are participant of the Sacrifice made by the Prieſt; according to their pietie aud deuotion; for in the Canon of the Maſſe; the Prieſt doth offer this Sacrifice; for thoſe who are preſent, and doe offer it for themſelues; and at, *Orate Fratres* he calles it *mine and your Sacrifice*. whence *S. Peter Damian* ſaith. *In theſe wordes is manifeſtly shewen, that this Sacrifice of praiſe, is offered by all the faithfull, although it ſeemes to be ſpecially offered by the Prieſt, Becauſe what he offering handleth with his hands: that the multitude of the faithfull doth commend with intenſe deuotion of their mindes.* And

it

it is a generall Rule of the law. He that doth aught by another, is accounted to doe it by himselfe; and so in Masse by assisting or being present with the Priest, they offer vp a Sacrifice by the Priest; who is before them, to the end, that as S. Chrisostome teacheth, *the Peoples prayers which are weake, laying hold vpon the more effectuall prayer, may together arriue to Heauen.* And learned Suares is of opinion, that the hearers of Masse may receiue the fruict therof, ex opere operato or from the merit of the worke in it selfe.

2. To heare Masse is to associate our selues to the Angels; who are present at so high a misterie; witnesse *S. Chrisostome* and *S. Ambrose* giving this reason saynig: *Thou canst not doubt but that the Angels doe assist, when Christ himselfe*

himselfe assisteth, and is immolated.

S. *Gregorie* teacheth that at the time of this sacrifice. *The heauens are opened, the Quires of Angels are present, and earthly things are ioyned to celestiall.* O with what reuerēce ought one to be present at so high Misteries.

3. We doe not only associate our selues to Angels, bur euen to Christ himselfe, who doth vouchsafe here to descend vnto vs; and communicate his grace vnto vs; here renewing his last supper, and offering himselfe to God the Father, that he may reconcile vs vnto him.

4. He that is in grace, doth encrease in grace, aswell becauſe he offers this propiciatorie Sacrifice for himselfe, as also becauſe it is offered for him by the Priest as aboue said.

5. They obtaine the remission

of

of temporall paine, due for their ſinnes.

6. They eaſily obtaine what they deſire, if it be profitable for them: becauſe they offer a moſt acceptable oblation to God, by the hands of the Prieſt.

7. They appeare in the preſence of Chriſt, and by a liuely faith doe ſee Chriſt preſent, and may obtaine as much, as if they did ſee him with their corporall eies; if they aske it in due manner, as the blind man in the Goſpell obtained his requeſt of our Sauiour. For breuitie ſake I am forced to omit many other benefits, which are obuious in many ſpirituall bookes.

Certaine Rules concerning hearing of Maſſe: firſt it is certaine, that it is not neceſſarie for to heare the words of the Maſſe or ſee Prieſt, but it is ſufficient

that they be present according to the ordinary custome of Catholiques: otherwise the deafe, blind, and those who are remote from the altar, should neuer satisfie the precept of the Church.

2. None are obliged to heare more than one Masse in a day, although it be Christmas day; and in case that any one hath heard a Masse out of deuotion; not knowing that it was holly day; they are not obliged to heare another.

3. For the satisfaction of the precept of hearing Masse; it is sufficient, if they come in after the Epistle, so that they heare the Ghospell, and stay vntill Communion be done.

4. It suffices also to heare part of on Masse, and part of another; as for example: if any one doe come late to Masse, he may heare out

out the reſt of that Maſſe; and afterward heare another Maſſe, vnto that place of the Maſſe, where the other Prieſt was when they came in.

5. In hearing Maſſe, one may lawfully ſay the diuine Office, any vocall or mentall prayer, performe any penance injoyned, alſo one may performe any thing, that is in Order to the Maſſe; as to ring the Bell, fetch a booke, Thurible Incenſe, or any thing elſe that may be neceſſarie, either for the Prieſt, at the Altar; or for the Quire, while they ſing at Maſſe.

6. Prouided that they come with intention to heare Maſſe, no diſtractions may hinder the accomplishment of the precept, vnleſſe a man should wilfully diſtract himſelfe of purpoſe, or doe ſuch things as neceſſarily muſt

hinder the hearing of Masse.

7. Diuers are the causes, which may excuse any one from hearing Masse, on the dayes of precept. 1. those who are actually sicke; or when there is any probable danger, that they may receiue any hurt thereby; or that they may fall into a relapse, or continue their weakenesse. 2. those who haue care of the sicke, if there be any feare of danger, in the sicke party by their absence. 3. the reasonable command of the Superiour, to whom the subiect is bound to obey; and in case the Superiour should offend in commanding, yet the subiect is secure. I omit others as not belonging to Religious who are enclosed.

QVEST.

QVEST. V.

Whether they ought to haue any Sermons? and what is the ſubject of their Sermons?

HOw neceſſarie and profitable it is to haue often Sermons, for the comfort and inſtruction of deuout ſoules, may be gathered from the ancient cuſtome of all Religious Orders, and from the common practiſe of the Church. *Ludouicus Bloſius* adviſes, all Religious Perſons, alwayes to receiue the word of God, with a hungry minde, from whomſoeuer it be declared; and with what ſimple words ſoeuer it be ſpoken; and S. Chriſoſtome ſaith. *It is to me an argument of your progreſſe in diuine things, that you come hither dayly, with ſo great*

 A declaration of the third
promptitude, and cannot be glutted with ſpirituall doctrine, for euen as the appetite of corporall food is a ſigne of good health, ſo the deſire of ſpirituall inſtruction, is a manifeſt ſigne of a ſoule that doth well. Which is cõfirmed by our Sauiour. Ioan. 8. *He that is of God, heareth the words of God.* And Luc. 11. They that heare the word of God, and keepe it, are by him called Bleſſed.

But ſome perhaps will ſay; that by reading in a booke; they may get as much profit, as by hearkening to a Sermon, which many times is but ſimple; and ſometimes hath ſomthing in it, that might doe more hurt, than good. Wherto, I anſwer, that ſuch by their pretended excuſes, doe many times looſe that which might be moſt neceſſarie for their ſoules good; for there is no Sermon, ſo

ſimple,

ſimple, but that ſome good, or other may be made out of it; nay the ſimple perſons, many times, receiue greater impreſſion, by ſuch Sermons; & if they be wiſe their humilitie (which goeth ſtill with wiſdome) is ſuch, that they know how to make their profit on all occaſions. And they will rejoyce, at leaſt that it may doe good to others. And generally ſpeaking the more wiſe and learned they are; the more they frequent Sermons: But ſuch pretenders doe not well conſider, that this is a deceit of the enemie, who makes them negligent in this, that he may produce alſo worſer effects in them: beſides if they did truly examine their conſcience; they ſhould perhaps find, that this rather proceedes from tepiditie, and want of devotion, and from a ſecret Pride, that ſtoppes the paſ-

ſage of the Eares, that the good ſpirit of God cannot enter in: wheras where there is an humble ſpirit, dryed with the feruent loue of God; the leaſt ſparkle of the flint Chriſt Ieſus, will take fire and enflame it. Bleſſed Br. Giles would be rapt in extaſie, when he heard the childrē in the ſtreets, to ſpeake of God.

Moreouer this is in a manner, to condemne Chriſts Ordinance, who hath giuen peculiar authoritie to his Prieſts, to preach and teach, and hath promiſed his ſpirit and aſſiſtance vnto them; ſo that what comes from them, comes from him, that ſpeaketh in them; and in that manner we ought to receiue it, eſteeming it our faults, if we doe not benefit our ſelues there by. Or that we receiue hurt therby; for if we did come with humilitie, God who

inſpires

inſpires the Preacher would alſo inſpire vs to that, which should be profitable to our ſoules.

Laſtly according to Pliny, the liuing voice doth make a deeper impreſſion, than the dead voice; that is to ſay the reading of a booke is not ſo profitable, as the hearing of the word of God in a Sermon; which by the pronuntiation, countenance, habit and geſture of the preacher, hath more force: which made S. Paul to ſay to the Galathians c. 4. *I would be with you now, and change my voice.* That is as *S. Hierome* expoundeth it; I would expreſſe my affections, by a liuing voice; which a written Epiſtle is not capable of. For ſaith hee: *The diuine Scripture read doth edifie, but it doth much more profit, if it be changed from letters to voice. S. Anſelme,* and *Saint Thomas* doe interpret

this place, to the like effect. Whence it is manifeſt; that although one may profit much by reading ſpirituall bookes, yet the liuing voice is more fitting to explicate the diuine miſteries, with more force, and maketh greater impreſſion.

Hauing shewed briefly the neceſſitie and profit of Sermons: let vs ſee, what is the ſubiect that the Rule requires to haue in the Sermons. The Rule ſaith they are to propound the word of God, and induce them to Penance, and vertues: which is conformable to that which is ordayned in the Counſell of Trent. *The Preacher ought to preach thoſe things, which are neceſſarie to ſaluation, denouncing vnto them with breuitie and facilitie the vices, that are to be auoided; and vertues that are to be embraced, that they may eſcape the eter-*

nall

nall paine; and obtaine caleſtiall glo-rie. The ſame alſo our holy Father hath ſet downe in his firſt Rule. So that here the Pope intends nothing elſe, but that the Superiours should procure ſuch Preachers, as would labour for the good of their ſoules, and farther them in their ſpirituall way: eſpecially to incite them to Penance, for what is more profitable for the Profeſſours of Penance, than to heare of Penance, or is any thing more proper for the ſchoole of vertue, than to heare diſcourſe of vertue?

QVEST. VI.

Who are to be their Preachers?

THe Rule ſaith, that they ought to be ſome Religious

man, but doth not ſpecifie of what Order. But it ſeemes that ſuch was the intention of our holy Father; that as they were vnder the Gouernement of his Friars; ſo they should be directed in all things by them; for it is moſt reaſonable, that they should be gouerned and directed by ſuch as beſt know the ſpirit of the founder: who haue it not only by ſpeculation, but by practiſe; on which grounds the Popes haue ſubmitted Religious Men and women to their owne Orders, & in particular ſome of them haue exempted this third Order, from the Ordinaries as Martinus V. did; giuing this reaſon. For to avoid confuſion: becauſe euery one ſeeking to follow their owne libertie, without due ſubiection; did ſeeke to lead a life; according to their owne pleaſure. Iulius II.

giues

giues another reaſon: becauſe when they were vnder the Cardinall Protectour immediatly, they were gouerned and directed ſome times by the ſecular Clergy: ſome times by Religious of other Orders: ſometimes by the Ordinaries, and ſomtimes by others: although he ſpeakes, there of the poore Clares, who according to the will and teſtament of their B. Mother S. Clare, should alwayes be directed by the Friars: as is to be ſeene in her Teſtament, beſides what is in their Rule. Pius V. hath done it alſo, becauſe that the chiefeſt diſorders amongſt them, came from their Superiours: as being of diverſe ſorts, and therfore he would ſubmit them to the Generall of the Friar Minors, & Provincialls, in their ſeuerall Prouinces: giuing them full right and free authoritie,

thoritie, and all manner of Iuriſdiction, both in ſpirituall & temporall; ſo that it is no more lawfull for any one to interpoſe himſelfe, than to enter into anothers Iuriſdiction, and excerciſe their Function without lawfull authoritie. And afterward in the ſame Bull. *Ea eſt officij*. He ſaith that all their Confeſſours, and Preachers are to be approued by the Generall or Provincialls.

Pope Clement the 8. in the yeare 1600. in his Bull. *Cumſicut accipimus* ſaith: that for their peace, quiet, and regular Obſeruance, it was expedient that the Nunnes who are vnder their gouernement, should not invite nor accept any one to preach in their Churches, without leaue of their Superiours and vnder Cenſure Commandes, that none be admitted; but ſuch as are approved,

ued, and sent by their Superiours: and Leo the X. hath ordayned that all the Sisters, aswell of the Order of S. Clare; as also of the third Order, should be gouerned by the statutes and decrees of the Generall or Prounicial Chapters of the Friar Minors; and Superiours herein haue conformed themselues to the foresaid declarations; not that they Condemne others, of what sort soeuer; but that they haue found by experience, that as there are diuers mansions in heauen, and diuers wayes to come to them; so there are diuers spirits that walke in them, enery Order having a seuerall spirit, and fervour of deuotion and pietie, and withall that many times by the contrary comes great Confusion.

QVEST.

QVEST. VII.

Whether the Religious are to say the Canonicall Houres?

IN answer to this Question, it is necessarie to digresse a little from our purpose, to shew that the celebrating of the diuine Office, hath beene vsed in all Ages; and by all Religious Orders; euen from the Apostles time: for S. Clement puts certaine determinate houres of prayer, as an Apostolicall Tradition. The like doth Tertullian; S. Cyprian, and S. Athanasius. Pope Fabian in one of his Epistles, makes mention of the diuine office. Diuers ancient Councels, as that of Aquisgrane haue made decrees concerning the celebrating of the Canonicall Houres,

Houres, with many others which for breivtie ſake I omit.

Now that it hath bene the cuſtome of all Religious Orders; is to be ſeene by their Rules and conſtitutions: S. Baſill makes mention of 7. Canonicall Houres; declaring the circumſtances, and manner of ſaying them. S. Hierome sheweth that it ought to be the practiſe of Virgins. S. Chriſoſtom ſaith; that it was the cuſtome of the Monkes in his time. Caſſianus hath a large declaration of them. Caſſiodorus explicates, that of Dauid Seauen times of the Day &c. of the 7. times that the Monkes did praiſe God in: & S. Benedict patriarcke of all Religious in the weſterne Church, hath expreſſely ſet them downe in his Rule: to be briefe there hath bene no Religious in Gods Church, vntill now of late,

that

that haue not obſerued this Cuſtome of ſaying the diuine office in ſolemne māner in the Church; and therfore the Religious of this Order beſides what is in their Rule and ſtatutes, are to obſerue that which is ſo generally obſerued in Gods Church.

Beſides that it is cuſtome of the Churth : I will adde ſome reaſons therof: firſt therfore Religious perſons that haue abſtracted, and withdrawen themſelues from all earthly things ought to haue their Converſation in heauen, and to praiſe God continually, in imitation of the Angels, who night and day doe praiſe him.

2. Since we dayly receiue benefits; we muſt dayly be mindfull of them; and in as much as we may, praiſe the Giuer, in imitation of the Prophet Iſay. c. 63.

I will

I will remember the mercies of our lord; The praise of our lord for all things that our lord hath rendred vs. And *David. I will blesse our lord at all times, his praise alwayes in my mouth.*

3. We are but dull to Deuotion, & therfore it is piously ordained; that we should striue to raise our soules, by this kind of prayer; that our soules may be inflamed with the loue of God. Following the counsell of the Apostle: Ephes 6. *In all prayer and supplication praying at all time in spirit.* And hence the Psalmist saith: *My lippes shall praise thee.*

4. Religious Persons ought to seeke the good of others; now by this pious excercise others are drawen to deuotion and prayer; for examples are much mouing; and continuall experience doth shew, how beneficiall in this kind

kind; this manner of prayer is to the Church of God; the Apostle adviseth all to this good example 1. cor 14. *Let all things be done to edification, providing good things not only before God, but also before men.*

5. This manner of celebrating the Diuine office makes much to the splendour of Christian Religion, for if in the old law, there were Sacrifices, and ceremoniall rites, to be offered every day, to moue the people to deuotion and reuerence: how reasonable is it, that we should haue a continuall sacrifice of Prayer, to adorne the Church. There is no Nation so barbarous, but is astonished to see with what Reuerence and feare, our God is serued; when they vnderstand nothing else, they haue a feeling of it in their hearts: yea euen the

enemies

enemies of Gods Church, in this, doe admire at the devotion of the Catholique clergy, and particularly of Religious Women: who leaving their parẽts, Friends, and all worldly pleasures, doe night and day sing praises to God.

Lastly many other are the benefits of this prayer: for it is a spirituall refection of the minde: as those who deuoutly frequent it, doe or may experience. Also this prayer is very meritorious: for if any prayer be meritorious and satisfactorie, this is, especially when so many devout soules are gathered together, for if Christ hath said where two or three are gathered together in his name he is with them; can any one doubt but that he is in such company?

QVEST.

QVEST. VIII.

What are the times of saying the Canonicall Houres?

OVR holy mother the Church, hath ordayned 7. Canonicall Houres, to praise God; after the example of King Dauid, who saith Psa. 118. *Seauen times in the day, I haue said praise vnto thee.* And these doe put into our mindes the Creation of this world; which was accomplished in Seauen dayes. That we may praise the omnipotent Creator of all things. They represent also the 7. dayes in the weeke, directing vs to haue a care, how we spend our time; the like may be said of the 7. ages, of the world. Besides there are seauen gifts of the holy Ghost, which we aske in

in them, and may obtaine, if we aske them as we ought. The people of Israell went about the wals of Iericho 7. times, & obtained the victorie: by saying also of these 7. Houres we may obtaine victorie, ouer our enemies. Our Sauiour gaue vnto vs the forme of prayer in 7. articles; and the Church giues to vs the māner of prayer in 7. Canonicall houres. The Scripture saith The iust man falleth 7. times a day, such devout soules arise againe 7. times a day, by singing praises to God. The Sacraments by Christ ordayned are 7. and 7. times in a day they praise God for them: and pray that those Sacraments may be profitably communicated in the Church. There are 7. capitall sinnes, from which by their septinarie prayer, they seeke night and day to be delivered. As also

that

that all the world may not offend God in them. Lastly and principally the whole office is ordayned to represent vnto vs the Passion of Christ Iesus. The seauen Houres representing 7. principall misteries of the Passion: as in each particular Houre shalbe declared: and first concerning the Mattin.

Mattins consists of 3. Nocturnes, & Laudes. From whence it is called the nocturnal office, because it was said in the night. In the beginning: the 3. Nocturnes were diuided: the first was said in the beginning of the night: the 2. at midnight: the 3. in the Morning: afterward the 3. Nocturnes were said at midnight and the Laudes early in the morning: but now the custome is to say Mattins and Laudes together; in some places ouer night, at 9. a clocke

clocke or therabouts: in ſome places, in the morning at 4. or after. But in other places, at midnight: which laſt, is practiſed generally by all the children of S. Francis: and is commended vnto vs by the example of the Royall Prophet: who roſe at midenight to praiſe God, & after the exãple of our Sauiour, who prayed in the night: & of S. Paule who Act. 16. at midnight did praiſe God. And S. Baſill hath ordayned it, in his Rule: and ſo S, Hierome: and that for many reaſons; 1. to repreſent vnto vs the birth of Chriſt, his taking, and his Reſurrection. The Natiuitie by the firſt Nocturne, and therfore it is begunne with an invitation to praiſe our Lord, for all his benefits; and in particular for this: which is the ſumme of all other graces. The captiuitie or taking of Chriſt, is

represented by the whole office of Mattins, and particularly by the second Nocturne, where there is no Invitation, nor Hymne of praise, because it seemeth to be a time of sorrow: But the Resurrection is signified vnto vs by the third Nocturne, & therfore in the end, they breake forth into the praise of Almightie God in singing *Te Deum laudamus* & Laudes. And many are of opinion that our Saviour did rise a little after midnight.

Lactantius will giue another Reason, to wit, that they pray thus at midnight: that they may be prepared for the comming of Christ, which many hold wilbe at midnight. O Blessed Virgins that are not found sleeping but watching with the oyle of Charitie; sure they shall deserue to enter into the ioyes of the Blessed.

S. Chriso-

S. Chrisostome, will giue the third Reason, because Midnight is a time more proper for Recollection and prayer; for the mind being then in quiet, rest, Silence, and solitude, with more ease may be eleuated to God, and vnited to him by loue. And the soule is more lightsome, subtile, and sublime; besides the darkenesse it selfe may reduce vs to Compunction.

The 4. Reason, may be; that by praying in the night, we may obtaine those graces and gifts, which by day time are imployed in works of charity towards our neighbour: after the example of our Saviour, who as Theophilact saith, went to the montaine in the night.

5. Religious Persons ought to pray for the whole world; neither can they doe it in time more ne-

ceſſary ; than whilſt they are aſleepe, and take their reſt, wallowing perhaps in their beaſtly luſts ; whilſt theſe deuout ſoules ſeeke to pacifie the wrath of God.

Laſtly to omit many other reaſons ; ſome are of opinion, that this manner of riſing at midnight, is conuenient for to expell nocturnall illuſions, tentations, and ſuch like, which the diuell doth prouoke vs to in our ſleepe.

Prime is ſaid early in the morning, after the example of the prophet Dauid ; in diuers places of the Pſalmes : and the Prophet Iſay c. 26. and is as it were a preparatiou for all the workes of the day, the Hymne and Prayers tending to this end. And it is a very conuenient time for prayer; according to the wiſe man : Pro: 8. *They that watch early towards me, shall*

shall find me This houre also represents vnto vs the mocking of our Sauiour.

The other three Houres as it seemes to many are taken from the Iewes, and practised by the Apostles; and the Authors aboue cited doe for the most part name these three. The Iewes obserued Tierce, or the third Houre because at that Houre the law was ginen to Moises. The Christians obserue the same Houre; because the Holy Ghost descended at that time, Act. 2. They celebrated the sixth Houre or Sext, because on that Houre the Brazen serpent was set vp in the wildernesse; and we after the example of S. Peter Act. 18. doe obserue it, because on it, Christ was Crucified. As he was condemned on the third Houre. They obserued the Ninth Houre or None; because at that time

God gaue them water at Cades: and we honour this time, becauſe at this Houre, Chriſts ſide being opened: there came forth water and Bloud; adde to this, that it is the time of Chriſts: aſcenſion and this after the example of S. Peter and S. Iohn Act. 3.

Veſpers or Eueningſong, is obſerued in imitation of the Prophet Dauid: Pſal. 54. and our Saviour at this time inſtituted his laſt ſupper, and at this time, his body was taken off of the Croſſe.

Laſtly Compline, is of the ſame nature with Prime; for it is a preparation for night, as that is of the day; and in this we pray to be deliuered from all perills and dangers of the night; and at this time Chriſt made his prayer in the Garden; and alſo was buried, ſo that, as this buriall, was the compleat end of Chriſts

Paſſion;

Passion; so this seauenth Canonicall Houre, is called Compline, as that which makes compleat all the whole office of the day.

QVEST. IX.

Whether the Diuine Office ought to be sung?

EVen as in the Ancient law, amongst the offices of the Tabernacle and Temple, for to moue the people to deuotion; there were ordayned Singers, to praise God night and day. So in the Churches and Christian assemblies, it hath bene practised; that day and night, the diuine Office should be sung, in the praise and honour of God: to excite and prouoke all Christians to the same.

The Angels at the birth of

Christ; did beginne this sweet melodie; and our Saviour himselfe, as some do hold, did sing the Hymne after his last supper.

Haymo an ancient Doctour; interprets the words of S. Paule Ephes 5. *Speaking to your selues, in Psalmes and Hymnes, and spirituall Canticles chaunting and singing in your hearts to our lord*: Of singing the diuine office Quire wayes: *S. Clement* and *S. Denise*; make mention of this singing, and *Philo*, as *Nicephorus* testifieth, declares; that the Monkes of Egipt did alternatively sing Hymnes; and night and day did sing praises to God. *S. Damasus.* ordayned that in the whole Church, the Diuine office should be sung night and day; many Councells as the fourth Councell of Carthage; the 4. of Toledo, and lastly the Councell of Trent, doe

approue of this singing. *S. Chrisostome* saith, that the Monkes of Egipt, did rise to sing propheticall Hymnes; with very excellent harmonie. The foure Patriarkes of Religious Orders, to wit *S. Basil*, *S. Augustine*, *S. Benedict*, & *S. Francis* haue made particular institutions; concerning the same; and haue recommended vnto their followers, this Ecclesiasticall manner of singing: and our holy Father himselfe, did compose and sing Canticles in the praise of God.

The excellency hereof, may be gathered, from the consideration, that it is the function of Angels; as *S. Basil* saith, who continually sing in the presence of God. *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.* Wherfore no wonder that as *Saint Chrisostome* saith. *The Angels stand by them that sing, and hearing with great si-*

lence, after the singers doe cease, they applaude, praise, and adore God. and *Dauid* saith. *I will sing to thee in the sight of Angels.* Moreouer the Abbot *Marcellus* affirmeth; that nothing is so profitable vnto vs, and nothing doth more contristate the diuell, as the singing of Psalmes. To conclude: there is nothing doth more moue men to deuotion, than the pleasant melodie of the diuine office, celebrated as it ought to be. *S. Augustine* will serue for a peculiar example in this kind; who in his Confessions lib. 9. c. 6. could not but breake forth into teares of compunction; when he heard the musicall voices in the Church. His words are these. *How much, O Lord, did I weepe in the Hymnes and Canticles; being moued with the voices of thy sweet sõuding Church: those voices did sharply flow into*

my

my eares, and thy truth was liquefied into my heart. And from thence affections of pietie were inflamed in me, and teares did runne from me, & I was well, when I was with them.

QVEST. X.

How, and in what manner, the diuine office is to be said?

IT being certaine, that God out of his infinite mercy, hath brought Religious persons out of the perills and dangers of this world; for to honour and loue him aboue all things; It is necessarie to know, after what manner they may performe this charge: for as Gerson saith. *Nothing is more proper, nor more becõming Religious persons than to accomplish and discharge the diuine seruice*

duely and carefully. To this end I haue thought good, briefely to ſpeake of the preparation to the Diuine office; of the attention or intẽtion which are required in the doing of it; as alſo of ſome other things belonging to the diuine office.

The wiſe man ſaith Ecl. 18. *Before prayer prepare thy ſoule:* which is to be done; by withdrawing the minde from all earthly things, cares, and buſineſſe; that they may wholy attend to prayer.

2. By raiſing ſorrow for their ſinnes and offences, committed againſt God.

3. By conſidering the preſence of the diuine Maieſtie, thoſe that come thus prepared ſhall find profit in their prayer; whence S. Bernard teacheth, that as we prepare our ſelues to God, ſo God will appeare to vs.

4. By

4. By making good Intentions, as to ſay the diuine Office with intention to worship, praiſe, and magnifie God; or giue thankes to him for his benefits; or to ſay it in imitation of our B. Lady; or Angels: who continually doe praiſe God: in vnion wherof, they may offer vp their prayers. Or to aske pardon for their ſinnes: or to demand ſome vertue, grace, or ſome other benefit of God: either for themſelues, or for others; or for the ſoules in Purgatorie. Which intentions they may make, according as deuotion will ſuggeſt vnto them: either mentally or vocally.

5. By praying to God for grace, that they may doe this act to his honour and glory. A forme wherof, I will here ſet downe, as it was practiſed by our holy Father.

A prayer

A prayer before the Diuine office composed by S. Francis.

HOly, Holy, Holy, Omnipotent lord God, who was, is, and shalbe. Let vs praise extoll him for ouer.

Thou art worthy o lord our God, to receiue praises, Glorie, honour, and benediction. Let vs praise and extoll him for euer. The lambe that is slaine is worthy to receiue vertue, and Diuinitie, and Wisdome, and fortitude, and honour, and Glorie and Benediction. Let vs praise and extoll him for euer.

℣. We blesse the Father and, the Sonne, with the holy Ghost.

℟. Let vs praise and extoll him for euer.

℣. Let the heauen & earth praise him in his glorie.

℟. And

℟. And let them extoll & praise him for euer.

℣. And euery creature that is in heauen, and aboue the earth, and vnder the earth, the earth and sea, and all that are in them.

℟. Let them praise & extoll him for euer.

℣. Glorie be to the Father, and to the Sonne, and to the the holy Ghost.

℟. Let vs praise and extoll him for euer.

℣. As it was in the beginning, and now, and euer, world without end.

℟. Let vs praise and extoll him for euer.

Let vs pray.

ALmightie most holy and most high God, all good, and soueraigne good, wholy good, who alone art good; let vs giue thee all praise

all

all thankes, all glorie, all honour, all benediction, and let vs alwayes direct all good things to thee (they may adde) *as I doe this office I am to say in such intention.* Specifying the intention.

Or more briefly thus. *O Lord open my mouth to blesse thy holy Name, cleanse also my heart, from all vaine, peruerse, and noxious cogitations; illuminate my vnderstanding, inflame my will; that I may say this officie worthily, attentiuely, and deuoutly, and may deserue to be heard before the sight of thy diuine Majestie; through Christ our Lord Amen.*

Or thus. *O Lord in vnion of that diuine intention, where with thou here on earth didst offer praises to God the Father, I doe offer these houres to thee, for this', or that intention which they may name.*

The second thing here to be considered

considered is Attention, which is nothing elſe but the application of the minde, to that which one ſpeaketh or doth. And in regard of the office is threefold; to wit to the words, to the ſenſe of the words, & to the end of our Prayer. The firſt and third ſeemes to be neceſſarie not the ſecond.

The firſt is neceſſary in regard, that the act commanded conſiſts in words; the Church only commanding the exteriour act. The ſecond is profitable to thoſe who doe apply their deuotion conformably to the words; for there are many deuout, & pious ſentences, which may much eleuate the minde. The laſt is neceſſarie, for all humaine acts which take their dignitie from the end, and therfore, thoſe who ſay the Office, may frame intentions as aforeſaid, alwayes ſeeking to praiſe God,

God, according to the generall intention of the Church. Of this more in the next Queſtion.

QVEST. XI.

What Attention is requiſite for the ſaying of the diuine Office?

I haue thought good to put this Queſtion more at large, by that meanes to introduce ſome Rules, which may be neceſſarie, for the ſatisfying of ſome ſcrupulous ſoules.

The Attention to the words that is required, ought not to be vnderſtood, in that rigorous manner, that they ſhould pronounce euery word, with much drawing or ouer anxious care; but it is ſufficient that it be a humaine act, that we know what we doe, and what

what part to ſay, and what part we haue ſaid, or more briefely: it ſufficeth when the act is done in a humaine manner; that is they know what they doe, at leaſt in a confuſed manner.

Whence may be gathered. 1. that thoſe doe ill, who vpon apprehenſion of not ſatisfying their obligation, repeat words, ſentences, Pſalmes, & Houres againe & againe. Which proceeds ſometimes out of foolish deuotion: ſometimes out of Feare: and ſometimes out of weakeneſſe of minde: ſeldome or neuer with reaſon or diſcretion. For neither God, nor the Church euer required any ſuch thing of them: vnleſſe any one should by a wilfull negligence, omitt ſome notable part, or with voluntarie diſtraction, as beneath for in ſuch caſe they might haue ſome reaſon; for what

what they doe: but otherwise neuer. For I neuer saw any encrease their deuotion by their scrupulous repetitions, & I know that feare and apprehension seldome makes it better: bur ordinarily speaking, is the cause of more distractions: as for the last sort it is better that they doe not say it all; and Superiours & Confessours may & ought to take care of them; and not permit them to say it at all for certainely it hurts them both in body and minde.

Some will aske what they shall doe in case, that they haue omitted any part: wherto I answer. First that if they are not certaine of its omission, or that they haue not willfully omitted it; I would not advice them by any meanes to repeat any thing; but with more care, if they can, performe what followes: or that is

to

to be ſaid, at another time: and cõfiding in the goodneſſe of God: make vſe of the Priuiledge which the Popes Holyneſſe hath granted; by ſaying *Sacroſanctæ & indiuiduæ &c.* whereby all defects & faults, committed through humaine frailtie, are pardoned: and Pope *Innocent* the VIII. granted, that if they did omit any thing of the diuine office, not of ſet purpoſe; they might ſupply it by ſaying the Pſalme *Laudate Dominum omnes Gentes.* Secondly ſuppoſing that the omiſſion, were certaine or willfully cauſed, by voluntarie diſtraction: or otherwiſe: vnleſſe it be ſome notable part, to wit a Nocturne or the halfe of other Houres: there is no obligation to repeat the office againe. Wherfore if they chance to omit a Hymne, Pſalme, Prayer, Commemoration, leſſon, or ſuch like:

like: they neede not repeat it, nay to repeat it in time of saying the office, is a greater distraction, interruption, confusion, and disorder; than the former omission was, and doth no more satisfie the obligation, than if they had not done it. And if any one out of deuotion, without trouble of minde, would say what they haue omitted; the best way is to say it after they haue done the whole office; which at that time they are to say.

2. Although the ouer hasty reading be not commendable, yet it is free from sinne, although some words, or sentences, or verses be omitted, and much more, if it be only in the latter endes of the words, which through ignorance, or hast, are commited very often.

3. It is not necessarie that they pronounce

pronounce the words a loude but it ſuffices that they articulate the words, that they may know that they haue ſaid them; for one that is deafe may performe the diuine office, and ſatisfie the obligation of the Church.

4. It is not neceſſary that when two or more or ſaying the diuine office, that each one doth ſay all; but it is ſufficient if one doth Say, for example, the Leſſons, and the other doe giue eare; nay it is more conformable to the vſe of the Church. And in caſe, that they chance to be diſtracted, or doe not well heare, it is better to goe forward with the reſt; becauſe what the one doth, is virtually done by the others, who concurre to the ſame act.

5. The interruption of the Nocturnes, as now ſaying one Nocturne now another, although it

be for a long ſpace, made vp on ſome reaſonable occaſion, as weakeneſſe, multiplicitie of buſineſſe, or ſuch like; may be done lawfully. Nay ſome ſay that any manner of interruption, vpon iuſt occaſion, as for the cauſes aboue ſaid; or to doe an act of Obedience, of Charitie, or the like; is free from ſinne. Whence alſo I inferre; that it is much more lawfull, for one that is in the middle of the office, and is called to the Quire, or other acts of Religion, to leaue of their office, and goe forward where they left, without repeating what is ſaid before. The like may be ſaid when any one falleth ſuddainely weake, or cannot without difficultie goe forward, vntill they recover their ſtrength. And the ſame is to be ſaid of any reaſonable occaſion. Eſpecially if they returne

returne to their Office as soone as they haue conveniency.

6. Although that in the Quire, without some reason, the times of the Office are not to be altered; yet those who say the Office out of the Quire, may say their Office sooner or later, as their occasions and abilitie will permit, for it is sufficient to satisfie their obligation, if they say it at any time, from midnight, to midnight, and as for the Mattins they may say it ouer night from foure a clocke in summer and from 3. in the winter.

7. Vpon any iust occasion: as to helpe the Quire, or for commoditie sake, or to helpe another, they may lawfully transpose the houres; as to say Mattins after Prime, or the other Houres, for generally speaking the Order of the Office, is not of precept; espe-

cially, when any reasonable occasion requires the contrary.

The Attention to the sense is very good, but as it is said before not necessarie: for euery one doth not vnderstand what they read, and few or none vnderstand all; whether it be in their owne language, or in lattin; as for example are not there many Passages in the Psalmes of Dauid; that the greatests schollers hardly vnderstand? True it is that the diuine Office doth much consolate a soule, that seekes with deuotion to apply his mind to the sense of the words: But it is not absolutely necessary; to vnderstand any part whence that which is more commune, and in some kind necessarie, is the Attention to the end: wherof we will speake a little more: and first we must suppose.

That Attention is three fold,

to

wit Actuall, virtuall, & habituall. The first is when actually the mind is attentiue to the end, as to praise God. The second is virtually included in some precedent actuall intention: as for example, when in the beginning of the Office one maketh and actuall intention, to say the diuine Office, to praise God, if afterward we are distracted, or doe not reflect vpon the intention formerly made; yet by vertue of the actuall intention made; the act is no lesse meritorious. The third that is Habituall Attention; is no thing else, but what is done out of custome, without reflexion of the vnderstanding.

Now although it be most perfect, to haue an actuall attention; yet it is not necessarie, for humainly speaking it is impossible to haue it; vnlesse it be by some

ſpeciall ſupernaturall grace : but it is ſufficient to haue a virtuall Attention ; which ſuffices in all humaine acts ; ſo that if at any time either before the Office, or in ſaying of the Office, we haue had any actuall intention to performe this act, to Gods honour and glorie ; it is ſufficient for the ſatisfying of the obligation. But the third is not ſufficient, taking it as it is in it ſelfe, otherwiſe, one that is a ſleepe might performe the Office.

Notwithſtanding ſome doe explicate this habituall attention, in ſuch maner that it may be ſufficient. As for example when one goeth to the Quire, or takes his Breuiarie, being in that diſpoſition that if any one ſhould aske him wherfore he did ſo, he would anſwere, to ſay his office. This alſo I eſteeme to be true in it ſelfe, and

maintained

maintained by many graue Authors: For indeed it is a virtuall intention, or attention, for that although, as we suppose in this case, there hath bene no precedent act of attention, or intention, yet virtually in doing that which suche acts require; what follows may be said to be done virtually by it; that is, that it may haue the same reasō, as if there had bene an actuall intention: especially when we suppose the act, to haue bene done with iudgement and deliberation: Which is the most that the Church commandeth.

To conclude this point; It is not necessarie, although it be good to make any intentions to satisfie the precept of the Church, or to apply the minde much to the words, or sense, for these many times cause distractions; but it is sufficient to doe the act com-

manded with deuotion and reuerence; as becommeth the seruice of God.

QVEST. XII.

Whether Distrations doe hinder the satisfying of the Precept?

THose who haue written of this subiect, doe set downe three sort of distractions; to wit of infirmitie, of negligence, and voluntarie.

The first, to wit of infirmitie, doe not hinder the satisfying of the precept: for all are subiect to them, and many times the more we labour to free our selues from them, the more we are troubled. Wherfore it is better to let them passe quietly; and recall our minds by reflecting on what we are doing,

or casting our eies vpon the Crucifix, or vsing some such like pious meanes. And in case that the diuell should suggest evill thoughts, of what sort soeuer, they ought not to trouble themselues with apprehensions, and fears, but goe on confidently; invocating the grace of God, or craving assistance of our B. Lady, or other Saincts: as their deuotion shall suggest vnto them. And if they be alone, where they can conveniently, they may prostrate vpon the ground, or make some little prayer, or such like, being confident that such doe no way hinder the performance of the diuine Office.

The second which are of negligence, for want of preparation or consideration, of what wee doe, or because our minds are busied about other things, or

out of ſome care or charge that we haue, or ſuch like, doe not hinder the performance of the obligation. Although they may be faultie more or leſſe, according to the negligence committed, but neuer comes to a mortall ſinne.

But voluntary Diſtractions, that is, when one doth willfully, and deliberately neglect to apply his minde to the diuine Office; or doth doe ſuch things which directly may hinder, the foreſaid Attention, as writing, counting of mony and ſuch like; according to the moſt probable opinió, doe hinder the ſatisfying of the precept: becauſe it cannot be thought an act conformable to the precept. Others I know, hold the contrary, but that I leaue to the iudgement of the Confeſſour who may prudẽtly make vſe of it.

Howſoeuer

Howſoeuer Nauarre, and many others, hold; that if the diſtraction be only of the mind, although it be done deliberately, it neuer arriues to a mortall ſinne. Nor hinders the performance of the diuine Office: moreouer he excuſeth any one from ſinne, who whilſt they ſay the Office, doe put on their cloathes, combe their haire, waſh their hands, or ſuch like: which doe not much hinder due Attention: which is much more excuſable in thoſe that haue any thing to doe, for the Quire; as to prepare the bookes, to find out the leſſons, or generally to doe any thing, that is for the furtherance of the diuine Office, that is then ſaying, or immediatly to be ſaid: whence to ſhew others, where they ſhall find their Office, to helpe them in any thing, is lawfull, for a Superiour,

or one that hath care of the Quire, to ſpeake to this perſõ, or that perſon; and to take a care before hand, that no confuſions be committed; for theſe are ſo farre from being ſinne, that they are meritorious; and if for theſe; or for ringing the bell, fetching a booke, candle, incenſe, or ſuch like; they chance to omit any part of the Office: they neede not repeat it; but goe forward with the Quire.

From all that hath bene ſaid, we may gather that it is not ſo hard a thing to ſatisfie the precept of the Church; for that a morall humaine act is ſufficient; & therfore the Religious ought not to trouble themſelues, with ſcrupulous and apprehenſiue thoughts, much leſſe to make repetitions, which are ſuperfluous, more to ſatisfie our owne conceits, than

to fulfill the commandement of the Church.

What follows in the Rule, concerning the making of the Office, according to the vse of the Romane Church; is the same; that our seraphical Father gaue to all his Children; desiring that in all things they should conforme themselues to the said Romane Church, which is to be vnderstood of the manner of saying of it, or rather what the Romane Church shall ordaine herein.

QVEST. XIII.

What is the Office of the lay Sisters?

ALthough what hath bene said before, may proportionably be applied to this; especial-

ly for the signification of the 7. Canonicall Houres, the Attention, and such like; yet for the comfort of those deuout soules, who for the loue of God haue forsaken the pleasures, and the vanities of the world, to serue the seruants of God; for the aduancement of Gods glory: and are called lay Sisters because they doe not tye themselues to the Quire but spend their time in the workes of the Communitie, and in all other excercises of Religion; doe seeke to benefit their soules; & such state being performed with true humilitie, and charitie, is without all doubt, of great merit, & as the greatest persons haue most willingly vndergone. I will adde a word or two.

These Sisters being not to serue the Quire, haue another Office ordayned them; that is shor-

ter,

ter, becauſe it may not hinder the intention, for which they came to Religion; to wit, to doe the ſeruice aforeſaid: And for Mattins they are to ſay twelue *Pater Noſters*, with *Gloria Patri*, in the end of each *Pater noſter*. Which number of 12. preſents the 12. Apoſtles, and the 12. Patriarkes, the 12. fountaines of Helim, the 12. ſtones in the Rationall of the high Prieſt. The 12. Loaues of propoſition: the 12. ſtones wherof the altar was made: the 12. ſtones taken out of Iordan: the 12. oxen that ſuſtained the braſen ſea in the Temple: the 12. ſtarres in the eſpouſes crowne: the 12. Foundations of the citie: and the 12. gates of Paradiſe: vpon all which, I might frame pious ſimilitudes, but I leaue it to their more pious conſideration.

For the ſix houres, they are to

ſay

say Seauen *Pater Nosters* & *Gloria Patries*, as aboue: for each Houre, and moreouer at Prime they are to adde *Credo* at the end of it, and after the Psalme *Miserere*. Which two are also said after Compline.

I need not here repeat, what hath bene said of the number Seauē: but our holy Father whose deuotion was very great, to the versicle of *Gloria Patri* would adde this, for the manifestation of the holy Trinitie, to whom their prayers are directed; and because it is very good to make a profession, of our Faith, and to shew what their life is, especially morning & eneningh therfore our holy Father, would adde the Creed, at those two times, as also the *Miserere* which is a Psalme of Penance.

And here we may note that in the Rule, no mention is made of

lay Sisters, although the commune custome of the Order, doth so vnderstand this Office to be ordained for the lay Sisters; who most commonly doe not know how to say the Canonicall Houres; yet if we take the words of the Rule; it should seeme that it may be vnderstood generally; That all those who cannot say the other Office; may in steed of it, say this; which I iudge without wresting the words may be vnderstood also, of those who through weakenesse or infirmitie, are not able to say the other; especially when it is done by the consent of Superiours, and that conformable to their Rule. True it is, that if we stand in the rigour of the precept of the Church; which by custome takes place also in Religious Persons, as I will endeauour to declare in the last Chapter;

Chapter; when they are not able to say the divine Office, they are not obliged to say this Office, of lay Sisters, but in Order to their Rule, which each Religious person ought to follow, in as much as they can conveniently; when they cannot say the Canonicall Houres they ought to say this, & Superiours ought to be facile in granting them the libertie of their Rule: especially when this hath bene granted by the Popes, to the poore Clares; who if they haue not sufficient skill, or knowledge to say the Canonicall Office, may by the iudgement of their Prelats, yea of their Abbesses; satisfie the precept of the divine Office; by saying the Office of the lay Sisters. Which priuiledge by way of communication, the Religious of this Order may enioy.

As for what followes in the Rule

Rule of thankſegiuing before & after meat, it is now commune to all; for all Religious Perſons doe follow the vſe of the Romane Church: ſo that here is nothing new: vnleſſe we may ſay, that our holy Father would haue them to vſe ſome particular acts of deuotion, before and after meat: which is alſo practiſed, by the Religious of this Order; as examining their conſcience before Dinner; and making their Croſſes after Dinner; or ſaying the 7. Penitentiall Pſalmes: or ſuch like.

QVEST.

QVEST. XIV.

How many times in the yeare, they are to goe to Confession and Communion?

THe Rule sets downe expresly, only three times in the yeare; not that it forbids to communicate oftener; and therfore it leaues them, to the statutes; which also is seene in the Rule of the Poore Clares, who are to confesse 12. times a yeare; and Communicate 7. times: and yet now the custome with them, is to doe it once, or twise a weeke. The Councell of Trent ordained; that all Religious, should confesse and communicate at least euery month. Pope benedict the 12. would haue the Benedictines to cõfesse weekely, and

and communicate monthly at leaſt. The Brigittins haue in their Rule, that they should Communicate on all Feaſtes and Sondayes of the yeare, and on Satterdayes with leaue.

In this Third Order the Superiours, conformably to the intention of the Rule; haue ordayned that they should confeſſe once a weeke, and Communicate on all Sondayes, and Hollidayes; with other particular Feaſts, which are obſerued by cuſtome, or are of the principall Feaſts of any of the three orders of S. Francis; in ſome places alſo they cõmunicate euery thursday. And oftener with leaue of Superiours.

But ſome will aske: whether it be good to confeſſe, and communicate ſo often? I anſwere firſt; that Confeſſion is only neceſſary for

for one that is in mortall ſinne; and therfore if they be only in venial ſinne; there is no neceſſitie of confeſſion; but it is to be made as often, and as ſeldome, as they ſhall find it profitable to their ſoules: and in this I would advice all, to ſtand to the iudgement of their Ghoſtly Father. For as I would not commend any one, that preſuming vpon their owne Innocency; should neglect this Confeſſion, when the ordinary time of Confeſſion is; ſo I would not approue, that any one through ſcrupulous conceits, should goe ſo often to confeſſion. For experience teacheth, that the one doth many times as much hurt, as the other doth good.

The frequency of Confeſſion muſt needes be good: for. 1. it is a good preparation to Commu-

nion.

nion. 2. It giues remiſſion of ſinnes, and eternall paine: and by frequency alſo, the tẽporall paine 3. It oftentimes raiſeth Contrition. 4. makes vs leſſe inclined to ſinne. 5. It weakeneth the power of the diuell. 6. It ſtrengtheneth vs againſt temptations: with many ſuch like effects: which follow the prudent and good vſe of Confeſſion.

Now on the contrary, ſcrupuloſitie and anxietie of minde, although they doe not hinder the remiſſion of ſinnes; yet they take away, or at leaſt diminish, the other effects; for inſteed of making better preparation, to the holy Sacrament; they ſo perplex the minde, that it thinkes of nothing but of its ſinnes; and of the confeſſion; and ſo conſequently neglect the due ſorrow for them, and by the trouble of the minde;

the

the enemie getteth more advantage against them: and they hauing their mindes so busie, doe become weaker to resist temptations: and many times make themselues vncapable, not only of doing other acts of deuotiõ, but also of all other excercises of Religion: wherfore with prudence, and for the good of their owne soules, each Religious Person ought to stand to the iudgement of their Ghostly Father.

As for Communion, although S. Augustine is doubtfull, whether it be good to Communicate dayly; leaving it to the deuotion of each one: yet the Custome of the primitiue Church, now also in vse in Presters Iohns Country, was to communicate dayly; and the holy Councell of Trent doth aduise all Christians,

that

that at Masse they should not only communicate by spirituall affection: but also by sacramentall reception of the Eucharist. S. Ambrose invites vs to it, saying. *Receiue it dayly that it may profit thee dayly; so liue that thou maist deserue to receiue it dayly; because alwayes I sinne, I ought alwayes to haue a medecine.* S. Thomas giues this reason: Because man doth dayly want the healthgiving virtue of Christ, he may laudably receiue this Sacrament, and as the corporall food is taken dayly; so it is commendable dayly to receiue this Sacrament.

But because this cannot conveniently be done, especially in Religious houses, where each one is to conforme his deuotion, to the wil and command of their Superiours: I esteeme it, as great a fault

a fault to goe to it, when the Superiours or Confessours shall not thinke it conuenient; as it is to abstaine, when they ought to doe it. For howsoeuer they may pretend deuotion, and great loue of God; yet they ought to consider, that the true loue of God doth all things with due order & discretion. It is most certaine, Saul had good intentions, when he reserued the best flockes of sheepe, & heards of cattell; that they might be immolated to God; the pretense was good; but it was declared vnto him; that *Obedience was better than victimes, and to harken to Gods command, better than to offer the fatt of Rammes.* S. Gregorie discoursing on this place, saith. *Wherfore is it that our Lord by the law, did command Holocausts and victimes to be offered; and here it is said that he will not*

haue

haue Holocausts nor victimes; but that they should obey him? vnlesse it be, because what is done without Obedience is not Holocaust or Victime? as if he should say, then thy workes are good, when they are agreeable to the judgement of those, who are set ouer thee. Let none therfore trust to their owne seluesin this, but follow the direction of their Ghostly Father, and custome of Religion.

Now as I know this Confession and Communion to be necessarie, for Religious Persons, to attaine perfection: when they are performed as they ought to be; so also I haue found many difficulties, in deuout and Religious soules, concerning them; as also many deceits of the diuell. Wherfore I will endeauour to helpe them in this point, still leauing

them to the direction of their Ghoſtly Father.

QVEST. XV.

What Contrition or Sorrow is neceſſarie in the Sacrament of Penance?

MAny deuout ſoules are much troubled about Contrition, and doe more afflict themſelues, about knowing whether they haue had due ſorrow, than labour to raiſe true ſorrow in their ſoules: which indeed is a deceit of the diuell: It were a great deale better, to goe on with confidence, and labour to encreaſe the ſorrow; for as long as they haue that deſire, they can neuer doe amiſſe.

Where we may conſider the difference betweene Contrition, and

and Attrition: Contrition, as the Councell of Trent defines it, *Is a sorrow of the mind, and a detestation of sinne committed, with a purpose of sinning no more.* Wherein we see there are three parts; Sorrow & detestation of sinne, with purpose of amendement. This Sorrow being voluntarie is meritorious, and is made compleat by that act of detestation, and is accompanied with purpose of amendement.

Attrition is nothing else but an imperfect sorrow, arising not so much from the loue of God, as for the respect of loosing heauen, or for feare of punishment, or such like, which Attrition although in it selfe, it be not sufficient yet being joyned to the Sacrament; it hath the same effect, that Contrition hath. Whence we may inferre, that although

Cõtrition be very good in it ſelfe, and that all ought to endeauour to haue it; yet it is not neceſſarie; for Attrition with the Sacrament is ſufficient.

Whence it is not neceſſarie, that they breake forth into teares; or to any ſenſible feeling; but it is ſufficient that it be in the interiour will, nay that we haue a kind of diſplicence, that we are not ſorrow enough: for Attrition knowne, is ſufficient for the Sacrament: which takes it force from the ordination of Chriſt Ieſus; not from our workes: ſo that notwithſtanding that I know, that I haue not the Contrition aboue mentioned, yet I am capable of Abſolution: and in this kind you shall hardly find one amongſt a hundred; that doth not come to Confeſſion with this preparation.

Neither

Neither is it neceſſarie to haue an actuall deteſtation of ſinne; but it ſufficeth that they doe ſome thing that virtually includes this deteſtation, ſuch as the act of Confeſſion is, for ſurely none can come with deuotion to Confeſſion, but virtually they haue this hatred of ſinne. In the like manner we may judge of the purpoſe of amendement, which is alſo neceſſarily included in the ſorrow, that we haue for our ſinnes: and a virtuall purpoſe of amendement is ſufficient. All which hath place in the Confeſſion of mortall ſinnes.

But as for veniall ſinnes; Henriquez and others, will giue this Rule. When the Confeſſion is of veniall ſinnes, it is not neceſſarie that the Contrition, deteſtation, or purpoſe of amendment be efficacious, & abſolute in all things;

for veniall ſinnes, are not matter neceſſarie for the Sacrament of Penance; neither is it neceſſarie, that the Confeſſion be entire: for it is left to each ones deuotion, to confeſſe what, and how many veniall ſinnes they pleaſe; without any obligation: ſo it is not neceſſarie, that it containe that ſorrow for the ſinnes committed, but a morall and ordinary ſorrow is ſufficient, and few or none, but haue it virtually, euen in comming to Confeſſion.

Which I ſpeake not that I would haue any the leſſe carefull to raiſe acts of Contrition, and ſorrow; but that I might exhort and counſell all in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that according to their Profeſſion they endeauour to make their ſoules a pleaſing Sacrifice to God, and withall to take heed, leaſt the enemie take occaſion

sion by their weakeneſſe of judgement, or infirmitie of minde, or body; to make this lifegiuing Sacrament to looſe its principall effect; which is to pacifie our ſoules, that with tranquillitie & ſecuritie of Conſcience; they may ſerue our Lord God.

QVEST. XVI.

What are the Conditions of Sacramentall Confeſſion?

THe Caſuiſts doe ordinarily ſet downe ſixteene Conditions, of Sacramentall Confeſſion. Which for the better ſatisfaction of the Religious; I will briefly declare.

1. Confeſſion ought to be *Simple*, that is in plaine and ſimple words ſufficient to manifeſt their ſinnes, not by declaring ſuch a thing, is

a mortall ſinne: or I haue ſinned mortally in this, or venially in that; or I feare I haue ſinned mortally, or ſuch like; but omitting ſuch expreſſions, they are only to declare what they haue done, leauing the judgement of their being mortall, or veniall to their Confeſſour; who is inſtituted by God as their judge, and to whoſe judgement they may ſecurely ſtand: and Sanches ſaith, that when the penitent hath ſimply told the ſinne, that he hath committed; doubting whether it were a mortall ſinne, yea although the Confeſſour should doubt of it, yet it is not neceſſary to confeſſe the ſinne againe, when they come to be certaine of the ſinne: whence we may gather how foolishly many doe trouble themſelues, with conceites, that their Ghoſtly Father doth not vnderſtād them,

for

for which they neede not trouble themſelues, but leaue it to them.

But ſome will ſay; I did not expreſſe my ſelfe, as well as I ought, and ſo my Ghoſtly Father did not vnderſtand me; I did not declare all circumſtances; & ſuch like: wherto I anſwere that it is ſtrange that ſuch creatures haue ſo many inventions, to trouble themſelues, and to torture their conſciences by foolish apprehenſions: wheras if they haue but a will or intention to confeſſe all, if they omit neuer ſo much, they neede not trouble themſelues; only voluntarie concealing of our ſinnes, doth vitiate the confeſſion: & as for circumſtances they are not neceſſarie to be confeſſed, vnleſſe it be ſuch that may chãge the nature of the ſinne; which the prudent Ghoſtly Father will eaſily diſcerne; and therfore they

may ſecurely leaue it to them.

And by the way I may note, that it is almoſt impoſſible, that any one should cõmit a mortall ſinne; but that they should eaſily remember the fact or thought, which are done with ſuch deliberation, as is neceſſarie to a mortal ſinne; but if it were a veniall ſinne or that their Ghoſtly Father did iudge them ſo, what feare can there be in it.

2. It ought to be *Humble*: that is, we ought to goe to Confeſſion, wich all humilitie of body and minde; imagining our ſelues to be brought before the iudge, which preſents vnto vs the perſon of our Saviour. We ought alſo humbly to receiue the inſtructions, and adviſe of our Ghoſtly Father.

3. It ought to be *Pure*, from impertinent things, not belonging

to confession : especially from detraction; the time of Confession ought to be employed, in accusing our selues, and therfore we, ought to avoid all impertinent, frivolous discourses, Questions, or such like.

4. It ought to be *Faithfull*: that is true, for no man ought to accuse themselues falsly, or to conceale any sinne; but let them declare those sinnes, that are certaine; as certaine and those that are doubtfull, as doubtfull: for it is no lesse sinne, to accuse our selues of a mortall sinne which we haue not committed; than to conceale a mortall sinne committed: both of them being against the Fidelitie, that is requisite in Confession.

5. It ought to be *Frequent*: not of precept, but of Counsell; as hath bene said before.

6. It ought to be *Plaine*, and open: that is Confeſſion is to be made in plaine and manifeſt termes, ſuch as are ſufficient to make the Ghoſtly Father, to vnderſtand the nature of the ſinne. But if it chance, that the Ghoſtly Father doth know the ſinne before, it is ſufficient to ſay I accuſe my ſelfe of that ſinne, or thoſes ſinnes yon know; provided that therby he vnderſtand that or thoſes ſinnes are intended by the penitent.

7. It ought to be *Diſcreet*: that is, that it be done with diſcretion, not vſing vndecent wordes, nor deſcending to much, into the circumſtances of each ſinne, eſpecially in ſinnes of the flesh.

8. That it be *Voluntarie*, out of loue, & reuerence to God: with a deſire to pleaſe him, & to make a voluntarie ſacrifice vnto him.

9. That

9. That it be *Shamefast*: that is, not after a iesting or boasting manner; but rather with confusion, to haue offended so louing a God.

10. That it be *Entire*: that is, that they declare all their sinnes; which are mortall; for at it is declared before, veniall sinnes are at their owne deuotion.

11. That it be *Secret*: that is, made only to the Priest; for the reuerence of the Sacrament: so that none are obliged to confesse by an interpreter, or to write their sinnes: although both may be done: for in case that the Priest should not vnderstand their language, they may doe it by an Interpreter: who is also bound not to reveale what he heares in Confession: and in cases of great difficultye; one may lawfully giue their sinnes in writing to the Priest,

Prieſt, who reading the ſinnes before the penitent; either by word or ſigne, affirming thoſe to be ſo, may lawfully abſolue him.

12. It ought to be *Lachrimable*: that is, with ſorrow and diſplicence, as hath bene declared before.

13. That it be *Speedy*: that is, as ſome will haue it, that as ſoone as they haue offended God mortally, they come as ſoone as they can to confeſſion. Or as others will haue it; that they be not ouer tedious in explicating their ſinnes; but promptly, and readily to make knowne their ſinnes.

14. That it be *Strong*: that is, they ought manfully to ouercome themſelues, in their ſhame and Confuſion; that they haue to confeſſe their ſinnes: although

it

it be sufficient that they answere to their Ghostly Father, who prudently perceiuing their difficultie; may and ought to aske them, and so assist and helpe them in their Confession.

15. That it be *Accusing*: that is, they are to accuse themselues, not imputing the fault vpon others, as on the diuell, on men, or the flesh; for although they may be the occasions of our sinne; yet we are the authors of our sinne.

16. That we ought to *Obey the things commanded*; that is we ought to haue intention to follow the counsell, and advice of our Ghostly Father; in overcomming our selues, or vsing meanes to avoid such sinnes; as we are inclined to: as also to follow his directions concerning scruples, & troublesome conceits, submitting our judgement to his: for he is con-

is constituted our judge: but aboue all, we are to fulfill the Penance, that shalbe by him enjoyned. But of this in the next Question.

QVEST. XVII.

How Satisfaction is to be made?

I will endeauour to satisfie this Question briefly, according to my intentiõ in this place, by these Rules following.

1. It is certaine, that if any one out of contempt, or willfull neglect, should omitt the penance enioyned, he cannot be excused from offence according to the qualitie of the fact. But if any one through obliuion, or negligence, should not performe it; they doe not sinne mortally, what

whatsoever the penance be.

2. It they performe the act commanded, although they chance to be in mortall sinne; before they doe it; yet it is sufficient: and much more if it chance to be done with some circumstance, that may be sinfull, as to doe it out of vaine glorie or such like.

3. If they doe the worke, or act enioyned by the Confessour; following his command; although they should doe it with intention not to haue it serue for their Penãce; they are not bounde to doe it againe: in like manner, if they doe the penance commanded, although they be distracted; it is sufficient, and they neede not repeat or doe it againe.

4. Although the Confessour doth set downe a certaine time; wherein they are to doe the penance,

penance enioyned; yet the time is not of obligation; but if they cannot conveniently doe it then, or haue neglected to doe it, they may doe it afterward, and satisfie their obligation; and with much more reason they may devide their penance, and now say one part, and now another.

5. When the Confessour shall enioyne, for example, the seauen penitentiall psalmes, or such like, it is sufficient if they say them with another.

6. It is a commune opinion, that if one Confessour hath enioyned some Penance, which the penitent cannot well performe; another Confessour may change such penance; into some other, as he shall iudge expedient: although he heares not the Confession againe.

Lastly

Lastly he that is now presently to doe something, whereby he may gaine a plenary Indulgence; needes not to accomplish his penance: for the indulgence is sufficient; which with more reason, we may say of penãces neglected or forgotten; which may be satisfyed by the gayning of Indulgences: which is one of the principall effects of such Indulgences; and therfore euery one ought to labour to obtaine them, that so they may securely satisfie for their sinnes.

QVEST. XVIII.

What is to be done in Generall Confessions?

IN this Question 3. things are to be considered: to wit, what preparation is to be made before such

ſuch generall Confeſſions; how the confeſſion is to be made: and how they may judge what ſinnes are mortall and what are veniall.

1. It is certaine that it is neceſſarie, to make ſome preparation, and to examine well our Conſciences, before we goe to make a generall Confeſſion: but the difficultie is to know, what preparation is ſufficient. The common opinion is, that after hauing invocated the grace of God, it is only neceſſarie to vſe a morall diligence; ſuch as they would employ in ſome matter of importance; according to their capacitie. ſo that here are three points to be conſidered, firſt they are to invocate the grace of God, without which they can doe nothing, that is pleaſing to God. 2. they muſt vſe a morall and humaine diligence that is ſeriouſly to con-

ſider their life paſt, with as much care, as men doe ordinarily vſe in any buſineſſe of importance; which done they ought not to trouble themſelues with conceits: if they had examined longer, they should haue remembred more ſinnes; for this is not neceſſarie, nor expedient. But they may ſecurely goe to Confeſſion; relying vpon the examine of their Ghoſtly Father, who may ſupply that defect. Laſtly I haue added, according to their capacitie, becauſe ſome are of bad memory, and ſome are ſcrupulous, and ſome are troubled with weakeneſſe of ſpirit, who by ouer diligent examine of their conſciences, doe rather hurt themſelues, and therfore in this, they are ſimply to ſtand to the judgement of their Ghoſtly Father, who prudently may giue them shorter or longer time as he

he shall see good, or none at all some times, only willing them to offer their good intentiõs to God, and relie vpon his examine. And in such case it is sufficient that they are ready to answer, what their Cõfessour shall aske them.

2. When they haue vsed a morall diligence as aforesaid; let them confesse all that occurres to their mind, certaine as certaine, doubtfull as doubt full, with the conditions before declared: manifesting the sinnes, and the number of them. Not that they should stand to declare the times in particular; but by saying I haue committed such a sinne, ten-times, more or lesse; and if they cannot declare the times, by reason of the frequency; it is sufficient to say: I haue bene giuen to such or such a vice, for a moneth, a yeare, or so long as they ordinarily did offend

fend in ſuch a ſinne; giving a generall notice of the qualitie of the ſinne.

Moreover after ſuch diligent examine they ought to know that if any ſinnes be forgotten; they are as well pardoned, and abſolved as thoſe they haue confeſſed, & if afterward there occurre any doubts; they are not bound to reiterate their Confeſſon againe, or to trouble themſelues: but with confidence proceed forward in amendment of their life, much leſſe are they bound to make any farther enquirie of their life paſt; for this cauſeth many difficulties, ſeldome any profit ariſeth thereby; but if there occur any mortall ſinne, knowne to be ſuch, with certainty that they haue not confeſſed it: it is not neceſſarie to repeat the foreſaid Confeſſion; but only to confeſſe that

that ſinne at the next Confeſſion; for when they omitt any ſinnes out of ignorance or obliuion, it is ſufficient to confeſſe that which was omitted.

But ſome will deſire ſome certaine Rule, wherby they may know whether they haue made a ſufficient examine of their Conſcience? wherto I anſwer that the ſecureſts way, is to ſtand to the iudgement of their Ghoſtly Father: who can beſt iudge of this: neuer the leſſe in generall, I will ſet downe, what Nagnus a learned Author hath, on this ſubject. If after Confeſſion more mortall ſinnes occurre, than were declared in Confeſſion; it is a ſigne that there was not ſufficient diligence, and therfore the Confeſſion is to be made againe: but if there doth not occurre ſo many ſinnes, as haue bene confeſſed; it

is a

is a signe that they haue vsed sufficient diligence; and the Confession is valide, and not to be iterated.

In this Confession, two extreames are to be avoided; to wit that none doe conceale their sinnes, or forbeare to confesse their sinnes; that they haue committed. And of the other extreame; that none ought to be over sollicitous, and anxious for this Confession: neuer satisfying themselues but reiterating still their generall Confessions: which is very dangerous.

The diuel hath many meanes to withdraw vs from Cõfession, and we deceiue our selues many times, with the apprehension of shame to confesse our sinnes, but we ought to propound to our selues, that we make Confession to God, who knowes all things,

and that the Confessour is but his vicegerent. Besides we ought more to feare the confusion at the day of iudgement, when all our sinnes, (vnlesse we confesse them here) wilbe laid open in sight of all men.

Some are diverted for feare of great Penances: but they ought to consider; what our Saviour hath suffered for our sinnes, the torments of Hell, and the euerlasting fire.

Others are affraid of some disgrace, or losse of their credit, and esteeme; but how friuolous this is, I leaue to their owne consideration: for what can be more secret, than what is declared in Confessions, which carries with it so many obligations of secrecie; and put the case, it were so: were it not better to endure this confusion, than to sustaine the

shame

shame and confusion of the damned.

Some excuse themselues, because they haue no hope to amẽd their faults, wheras they ought the rather to come to the sacraments, that they might obtaine grace; whereby they may the better amend their liues. The best way is to haue confidence in God, and call for helpe of the Angels & Saincts. Others excuse thẽselues, for that it is a hard thing, to make a generall cõfession, wheras they make it so hard by their foolish apprehensions and for want of humilitie; for if they would follow counsell, it would not be so hard, as it seemes to them.

As for the other extreame; although without all doubt the reiteration of generall Confessions may be good, lawfull and

meritorious: yet generally ſpeaking, I would not adviſe any one, to doe it any more than once, becauſe by ſuch often Cõfeſſions, they become many times troubleſome to themſelues, and others; fall into perplex and foolish ſcruples; ſpend much time, which might haue bene better imployed: nay many times renew paſſed tẽtations, & reſuſcitate the memorie of former ſinnes: to the imminent danger of their ſoules. For my owne part I haue found by experience; that for one, who is the better for it; twentie are the worſe: wherfore then, should any expoſe themſelues to danger, when they neede not: this being no way neceſſarie; wherfore if they will follow my counſell, each Religious after they haue made their generall Confeſſion, either at their Cloathing or Profeſſing:

feſſing, should neuer trouble themſelues any more. If they pleaſe they may make a yearly Confeſſion on the anniverſarie day of their Profeſſion, or other day, according to each ones devotion. But this by way of Counſell.

Laſtly becauſe many are troubled with perplexities and apprehenſions of mortall ſinnes; I will alſo ſet downe the ſignes of a mortall ſinne. Which requires foure things.

First that it be done againſt the commandements of God, or his Church. For vnleſſe it be directly againſt ſome precept, it cannot be any mortall ſinne.

2. In a weighty matter; that is, to make a mortall ſinne: it is neceſſarie that the iniurie be great, either to God, our neighbour, or our ſelues. For we muſt not

thinke, that every light word against Gods honour, every little wrong that we doe to our neighbour, or euery inordinate act, that we cõmit against our selues; must presently be a mortall sinne. No, no, God is not so rigourous; but then only there is sufficient matter of a mortall sinne, when their is some notable iniury, or some notable contempt, against the commandement: or Lawgiuer.

3. Although the thing be against some commandement, and in a notable manner; yet it cannot be said to be a mortall sinne, vnlesse it be done with deliberation, or iudgement: that is, we fully know the malice of the fact; and also haue a full iudgement of our actions whence children, men that haue lost their Iudgement, men that are carried away with any

any violent Paſſion; generally when there is any impediment, that the act doth not proceed from a full and deliberate iudgement; it cannot be ſaid to be a mortall ſinne: as in ſuch who are not throughly awaked, or in ſuch who are troubled with many bad repreſentations, grievous tentations or ſuch like.

Laſtly, beſides this perfect deliberation, it is neceſſary, that they haue a full Conſent: for without the operation of the will either actuall or virtuall; there can neuer be any ſinne: our Doctor Scotus giues this reaſon: Euen as a meritorious act, requires that it proceed from a full deliberation, and conſent of the will; ſo a demeritorious or ſinfull act, doth require a deliberation, and full conſent of the will; for God is not more prone to condemne,

than pardon. For to make this more cleare we wil produce some Rules, whereby we may the better iudge when the consent is full and deliberate.

1. If the party desiring euill, be so disposed, that if they could easily put it in execution, and doth not; it is a signe that there hath bene no full consent: for the motiue powers, are in full subjection to the will.

2. If any euill motions arise, & that vpon reflexion, the will doth reiect them; it is a signe that there was no deliberate will to it.

3. If such euill motions, or thoughts, doe continue in the minde, and that there be a resistance of the will, there is no consent, sufficient to make a mortall sinne: for the sensitiue powers, doe not obey to the will; but many times retaines such motions,

either

either by reason of the disposition of the body, or by some bad inclination of the minde, or by the tentation of the diuell; whatsoeuer resistance the will doth make; & euen the Saincts may be troubled in this manner.

4. If any one doubt, whether they would haue this or that, or in what disposition they were, or whether they haue giuen cõsent: it is a plaine signe; that they haue not giuen any full consent; for an act that is done with deliberation, would remaine in the memorie: as may easily be gathered by any morall act, that we doe. And therfore I should hardly condẽne any one of mortall sinne, that cannot absolutely accuse themselues of a deliberate cõsent: especially when the time is not prolonged before they goe to confession.

I neede not ſpeake any more of veniall ſinne, becauſe they are not neceſſary to be confeſſed, and by what hath bene ſaid of mortall ſinnes; they may eaſily iudge what is veniall : wherfore I wil conclude with this generall admonition. If any one haue once made a generall Confeſſion ad afterward out of devotion, would make it againe, it is not neceſſarie, to make ſo ſtrict an examine; for in ſuch caſe, he is not bounde to confeſſe all his ſinnes ; but as many, and as few ; as he pleaſes accordingly as he ſhall find it profitable for his ſoule.

Now becauſe we haue made ſo long a digreſſion, about Confeſſion : it ſeemes conuenient, to adde a word or two of the Confeſſour.

QVEST.

QVEST. XIX.

Who are to be their Confessours?

I neede not here repeat, what hath bene said before concerning the Preachers of the same Order, and spirit: but supposing what hath bene said; as having place here, in a more necessarie degree; because Confession is the only stay of Religion; whereon the good of a wel gouerned Cōmunitie depends; and therfore with much more reason, we may conclude that all Religious women, who are children of S. Francis, and are subject to the Order; ought to haue such Confessours as their Superiours shall appoint them; ordinarily speaking of their owne Order, and such hath bene the practise in Gods Church

vntill now of late, especially in our Order, where there haue bene many statutes made to this effect.

But some will say, that such statutes are vnmust, as hindering the libertie that every one ought to haue in their consciences. To this I answere, that it is great presumption in any one, to preferre their iudgement, before the deliberate counsell of so many graue Fathers, both learned and experienced, who commonly doe meet together in Religious Chapters, and whose acts after mature discussion, are ordinarily approved by the Pope himselfe. moreover divers, Popes haue iudged this necessarie; and therfore Leo 10. in his Bull *Non sine mentis displicentia.* Did command that no Brother or Sister vnder the care of the Friar Minors, should

should make vse of the *Bulla Cruciata*; whereby they might haue many Priuiledges in this kind; giving this reason: because where regular discipline is contemned, their necessarily Religion is like to suffer shipwracke. Pius 4. in his Bull. *Exponi nobis.* doth also forbid the fore said to mak vse of *Bulla cruciata*; or any other Priviledge, to the end that they may make their Confession, to any secular, or Religious Priest of any other Order, without leaue of Superiours: alleaging that it had bene so ordayned by Paulus 4. who commanded in vertue of holy Obedience, all Guardians, Presidents, and Friars, as also all Abbesses, and Nunnes of the second and third order: vnder no pretense whatsoever, to make their confession to any, but with leaue of their owne Superiours:

and

and becauſe that he heard that notwithſtanding the ſaid Decree, many did make vſe of ſuch Priviledges, in contempt of their Confeſſours o dayned by Superiours: and many diſtractions, troubles, and inquietude did come thereby; fearing alſo that from thence, ſome diſſolution of Regular diſcipline might happen, he renewed the foreſaid decree. Which afterward Pope Clement the 8. (ſeeing that ſuch libertie did turne to the detriment of Religion,) did extend 25. Novemb. 1599. to all Religious: Leaving them to the diſpoſition of their owne Superiours. And to omit many others. Pope Vrbane the 8. 19. Iunij 1630 hath declared, it, in theſe termes. *By the tenour of theſe preſents, we declare, it to haue bine and now is our Intention, that the Friars, and Nunnes*

be

be subiect to the ordinarie disposing of their Prelates, in as much as belongs to the Sacrament of Penance.

From whence I doe inferre that if for iust reasons the Popes haue limitted their Graces and Priuiledges, that they doe not extend them to this libertie of making Confession, to whom they please out of their Orders. Superiours may and ought to hinder any such libertie, which may cause any disturbance in their governement, and regular discipline.

But some will say in all this, we find that it is left to the Superiours, to doe what is best for their soules good; now it seemes somewhat hard, that they must be tied to one Confessour, there may arise many difficulties therein, to the ruine of soules; and therfore Superiours ought prudently

dētly to giue more libertie. Wherto I anſwere, firſt Superiours are bound, by the Counſell of Trent to giue them extraordinary Confeſſours twiſe or thriſe a yeare. 2. they haue yearely Viſitours who in ſuch caſe, may helpe them. 3. they may freely manifeſt their difficultie either by letter, or otherwiſe to their Provinciall: who will ſatisfie their deſire, according as he ſhall iudge expedient; and this ſeemes to be ſufficient for any ſoule, that purely ſeekes God. Beſides this, Superiours many times doe permit them to goe to any qualified Father of the Province. Adde to this the change of Confeſſours every three yeares, practiſed in our Order, which alſo as Barboſa teſtifieth, was decreed by the cōgregation of Cardinals the 15 Feb. 1593.

I know ſome may make other

pretenſes;

pretenſes; But I leaue it to their owne Conſciences, whether they doe it vpon good grounds; I verely belieue, that if they did diue into their owne hearts, they should find moſt commonly, that only ſelfe loue, and proper will together with the temptation of the enemie, doe miniſter ſuch deſires. I will not condemne all: but I thinke one amongſt twentie is hardly free: and I would they did ſeriouſly conſider; the great euill which ariſeth to a Communitie that is not vnited in the ſame ſpirit. For who can be ignorant of the great contẽtions, emulations, and diſſentions which commonly doe follow ſuch libertie, and generally ſpeaking multiplicitie of Confeſſours neuer makes a more perfect ſoule.

QVEST.

QVEST. XX.

What is the Benefit of Communion?

HAuing ſpoken of Confeſſion; it ſeemes convenient to adde ſomething concerning Communion: and firſt of the benefits therof.

Firſt this Sacrament doth ioyne and vnite the ſoule to God by grace. 2. It makes our ſoules, the tabernacle wherein God remaineth. 3. By this Sacrament we are made partakers of the merits of Chriſts Paſſion. 4. This Sacrament is, as it were the earneſt-peny of eternall life. 5. It comforteth the ſoule. 6. It reioyceth the conſcience. 7. It is a moſt efficacious helpe in tribulation. 8. It ſtrengtheneth our weakeneſſe.

neſſe. 9. It giues force to fight a-
gainſt the diuell. 10. It diminish-
eth and moderateth our Paſſions.
11. It allayeth our tentations. 12.
It blotteth out veniall ſinnes and
mortall ſinnes forgotten in Con-
feſſion. 13. It fortifieth vs againſt
dangers of ſinning. 14. It engen-
dreth Chaſtitie. 15. It mitigateth
the paines due to our ſinnes. 16. It
maketh vs prompt to doe well.
17. It provokes vs to deuotion.
18. It cleareth the vnderſtanding.
19. It inflameth the will. 20. It aſ-
ſureth our hope: with a hundred
ſuch like effects. Whence it is
called Sacrament of Sacraments,
Hoaſt, Sacrifice, Communion, Sa-
crament of the Altar, Viaticum,
Euchariſt, ſacred Miſterie, or ſuch
like: all which expreſſe the ſeve-
rall effects of this lifegiving Sa-
crament.

Cornelius à Lapide on the Pro-

phets

phets doth propound vnto vs tenne miracles in this ſacred Miſterie which we may apply to our ſelues.

1. The Tranſubſtatiation; wherein the ſubſtance of bread and wine is converted into the body & bloud of our Sauiour. And by it, we ſinners may be transformed from carnall, to ſpirituall; from proude to humble; from glutonous to ſober; from vicious to vertuous: and be renewed as the Apoſtle ſaith Epheſ. 4. in ſpirit of our mind; and put on the new man, that is Chriſt Ieſus: Yea be transformed vnto him, that we may ſay, we liue, not we, but Chriſt liueth in vs.

2. Chriſt in this Sacrament giveth vs, not only his body, and bloud, but alſo his ſoule, diuine Perſon, and his whole Diuinitie: to the end that we ſhould offer

not

nor only our body, to receiue the holy Hoaſt: but alſo the ſoule, and all its power, all our forces, cogitations, and intentions; that all may be directed to Gods honour and glory.

3: Chriſt doth here much humble himſelſe, for being immenſe he is now contained in a little Hoaſt; wherfore let vs not thinke much to humble our ſelues for it is very vnbeſeeming, that God ſhould ſo humble himſelfe, and that man ſould be puffed vp with pride. If we will haue profit of this Sacramẽt, let vs come with humilitie to our humbled God.

4: In the Euchariſt, Chriſt is whole in the whole hoaſt, and whole in every part of the Hoaſt: when we come to this ſacred Table; let vs giue our ſelues wholy to Chriſt, in our whole life, & in euery part of our life: in every houre,

houre, in every action : for as S. Bonaventure saith, *Our Lord hath offered his indivisible, and whole body, we are ill devided from him, and shall doe ill to defraude him of the least part of vs.*

5. Christ in the Sacrament is impassible; for although the species be broken or burned; yet Christs body cannot be broken, nor burned. We who come to communion ought to imitate Christs impassibilitie : that is as S. Thomas saith, although we cannot be impassible as Christ; yet with a certaine kind of impassibilitie, let vs be patient : that is, let vs so manfully suffer all things, that we may seeme impassible.

6. Christ in the Eucharist is not to be perceived by any sense, but remaines as it were insensible; so we ought to mortifie our selues, that we become insensible, not li-

uing

uing according to our ſenſes, but in ſpirit and minde.

7. Chriſt in this Sacrament, hath a body immortall, ſhining, Agile, and ſubtile: ſo let vs come with vnſpotted minde, ſhining with the ſplendour of good examples, being agile in fervour, & ſubtile in contemplation.

8. Chriſt hath given power of Conſecration to all Prieſts good or bad, without any exception: ſo that the effect of this holy Sacrament doth not depend vpon the goodneſſe of the Prieſt. Euen ſo ought we to loue all indifferently for God, yea although they be our enemies.

9. Chriſts body, although it be contained in ſo little a place: is no way out of its due Order, and compoſition: we ought alſo in humble and low Offices, ſtill to keepe the ſame ſtay, doing all

things

things the ſame manner, as at other times, tending ſtill to the ſame perfection.

Laſtly. Chriſt in the Euchariſt, doth feed all the faithfull, by vniting and incorporating them vnto him, and imparting vnto them his owne ſpirit: for as S. Cyrill of Alexandria ſaith, If one put wax, into hot melted wax, both muſt needs be mingled together: ſo he that receiueth this Sacrament is made one with Chriſt.

QVEST. XXI.

What Preparation they ought to make before they goe to this Communion?

IF we ſhould vnderſtand this Queſtion of the Preparation, in Order to the obiect, which is the Body and Bloud of our Saviour;

viour; it is certaine no created power is sufficient to receiue him. Yea although they had all the perfections of all the Angels, and Saincts that euer haue bene, or euer possible may be; so that in this sense there is no possible meanes to make worthy preparation. But each one may striue according to perfection and grace that God shall giue them.

But taking it in order to the subject; that is according to the capacitie of our mindes; our Question intends to examine rather what preparation is sufficient to excuse vs from sinne, and offence, in going to the holy sacrament: for we doe not come perfect, but to be made perfect therby. This sacrament being the fountaine of all Good; I will only shew what may hinder vs from the effect therof. Wherfore

ſuppoſing faith, that is, that they be faithfull Chriſtians, and beleeue what the Church holdeth in this point; (whith I ſay becauſe it is not neceſſary to make any act of Faith) I eſteeme only two things neceſſarie for one that goes to this holy Sacrament: To wit, that they be not in mortall ſinne, and that they come with humilitie.

It is the common opinion, that he who is in mortall ſinne, and commeth to Communion; doth not only looſe the fruict therof, but doth committ another great ſinne of ſacriledge. Which is to be vnderſtood, thus; He that knowes himſelfe to be in mortall ſinne, or willfully neglecteth the Confeſſion of his ſinnes, or hath iuſt reaſon to doubt, that he hath committed a mortall ſinne; cannot come to this ſacred Commu-

nion.

nion. But if after having vſed a morall diligence in the examine of his Conſcience, and made his Confeſſion without concealing willfully any mortall ſinne; he may not only come ſecurely to this Sacrament, but alſo obtaine remiſſion of thoſe mortall ſinnes, which through humaine frailtie he hath forgottē. And in this sēſe the Fathers haue interpreted the words of S. Paule. *Let a man proue himſelfe, and ſo let him eat. &c.* that is, let a man ſee whether any mortall ſinne be in his Conſciēce; not that he ſhould now going to Communion, make a new examine, or now thinke of his ſinnes, no, no; It is not now time to doe it, but it ſufficeth that he hath done his endeavour, & now hath no mortall ſinne that vpon certaine grounds may trouble his Conſcience.

And therfore I adviſe all Religious ſoules, firſt, ſimply to leaue themſelues to the iudgement of their ghoſtly Father, who can beſt iudge when it is convenient for them to goe to Communion. Secondly, this ſuppoſed they ſhould neuer thinke of their ſinnes, but ſettle themſelues with devotion to receiue this B. Sacrament; retorting vpon the enemie, *I am not now to confeſſe, I am now to receiue my Lord and Maſter, who will not refuſe me a ſinner ſince he dyed for ſinners. I come to him as to my Redeemer and ſo cannot doubt of mercy.*

As for the ſecond, our Holy Mother the Church, in imitation of the Centurion doth inſinuate this preparation, when it vſeth thoſe words. *Domine non ſum dignus.* &c. before Communion. Not that this humilitie is more

is more neceſſarie to perfection than any other vertues, but becauſe it is a diſpoſition more conformable to our nature. For many might excuſe themſelues, I cannot haue fervent acts of devotion and loue, or ſuch like; I cannot come with that puritie of mind, as becommeth ſo pure a Sacrament; but none can excuſe themſelues from Humilitie; the Publicane may haue this, as wel as Dauid; & both receiue the fruict of their deſires. S. Mary Magdalen, by her humilitie, deſerved to heare: *Many ſinnes are forgiven thee*: and by humilitie our B. Lady may be ſaid to haue receiued the eternall word of the Father. It is this Humilitie, if we may belieue S. Bernard, that made her Virginitie pleaſing to God, who giveth grace to the humble.

Now for the benefits of de-

vout soules I haue chosen some devout considerations, to be practised in the time of going to Communion.

Certaine pious devotions, to be vsed before Communion.

THose who are to communicate, may mentally or vocally say.

Behold O Lord thou comest into the desart, that againe thou maist dwell with beasts. O how happy am I, since to satisfie my hunger, and want thou hast not only changed stones into bread, but bread into flesh.

Behold O Lord, how I am blinde, a leaper, sicke of the palsey, oppressed by the enemie. O Iesu sonne of Dauid haue mercy vpon me: we haue heard what great things thou hast done in Capharnaum, amongst the

Iewes,

Iewes, yea all ouer the world: doe also one thing in my soule, more oppressed than any other, and let all the world know that thou art the Lord our God.

℣. Behold me as one of them who followed thee into the desart, that I may heare thy Word. As one of those sheepe, that hath no Pastour besides the. Blesse I beseech thee o Lord our bread, and satiate me with thy selfe, that I faint not in the way.

Per haps I am that vnhappy Ierusalem, on which weeping thou didst complaine of its blindnesse, ruine, and insensibilitie. If it be so; at least enter triumphing into this my Hierusalem, that with the children I may cry out, Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Let all tribes and Nations with triumph praise thy holy name, because thou art our king.

If now o Lord thou wilt againe eat the Paſche, behold me, let me be the Parlour, I would to God I were great enough, and exquiſitely adorned according to thy deſire: that thou wouldſt wash my feet, and powre forth thy moſt ſweet conſolations, which thou didſt giue to thy diſciples: and feede mee with thy precious body and bloud; that the cruell and proditorious ſpirit of Iudas may depart from me.

At leaſt let me be the Croſſe, whereon thou maiſt be faſtened, not that thou shouldeſt ſuffer againe; but with violence I may perceiue thy nailes; for it is good for me to adhere to thee after that manner: neither doe I deſire euer to be ſeparated from thee.

O let me berome a new, pure, ſolide, ſealed, and wel guarded ſepulcher, where in thou maiſt be laide, no more dead but aliue; that at

length

lentgth according to the Prophet Isay it may be made glorious.

O how happy were my lot, if I were that Chamber wherin thou mightest enter, and make me heare that most sweet, Pax Vobis; nolite timere. Where I might see thy hands, and feete and wounded side, and touch the place of thy wounds: whence I might be illuminated to the knowledge of thee, and enflamed with thy loue. True it is thou dost appeare in this my chamber; but I feare whilest I am absent, and distracted on creatures. Be thou present ô my Lord, and recollect my senses, that they may be present, and exult with ioy hauing seene our lord.

O my soule, I would to God that thou haddest that happynesse to be that heauen wherein magnificently is entred the conquerour of the diuel, and lord of heauen and earth. Indeed he is carried in the cloude of the species of

bread and wine, but doe thou open that he may enter in into thy hart, lift vp your gates, yee Princes, and be yee lifted vp, o yee eternall gates, and the King of glorie shall enter in: who is this king of glorie? the lord of power he is the king of glorie. O God let this be thy rest for euer; here thou maist dwell because thou hast chosen it. One of thy seruants hath said, those that hope in thee shall reioice for euer: and thou shalt dwell in them: and all that loue thy name shall glorie in thee, because thou wilt blesse the iust: thou only art become my hope, and my refuge: to whom shall I goe, for thou hast the words of eternall life: therfore dwell in me for euer, & make me iust that thou maist blesse me.

Deuotiõ will suggest many such like; & this is Farre more pleasing to God than still to be raking in the dunghill of our sinnes rather

following

following the temptation of the enemie, who seekes to hinder this so profitable an act for our Soules good.

CHAP. V.

Of the office and Election of Superiours.

EVery house, if it be a monastere of men shall haue a superiour of this Fraternitie, who shalbe called the locall Minister: But if it be a Monasterie of women, shee shalbe called Mother. They shalbe chosen by their convents: or instituted, by their Provinciall Superiours,

or generall Visitours : In such sort not with standing that none of them be perpetuall : but for certaine times, which Ministers or Mothers shall obey in all things which belong to this present Rule, to the Provinciall Ministers of the Order of Friar Minors, and to the Visitours by them appointed ; during the time that they they shalbe in their said office, and charge. And as for other offices of the house they shall obserue their statutes.

EXPOSI-

EXPOSITION.

IN this chapter there are contained 5. things: first that the Superiour is to be called Mother, (for here I omit the Monasteries of Men not as yet erected in our Province) 2. that the Superiours election shalbe made by the convent: or communitie, or else instituted by higher Superiours. 3. that no Superiours ought to be perpetuall. 4. that the Superiours shalbe obedient to the Provinciall of the Friar Minors, in the Province where they are. 5. that for the election of other offices, they are to observe what statutes shalbe made by their lawfull Superiours. I haue purposely omitted here to speake of visitours; because we shall speake more at large of them in the 8. Chapter. Of these seuerally. But first for more clearnesse, we shall

adde

adde a word or two of the names of their houſes, as alſo of neceſſitie of Superiours.

QVESTION I.

How the houſes of Religious Perſons are called.

I haue purpoſely propounded this Queſtion, that the Religious might conforme themſelues to what is ſignified by the name of their houſes, which commouly are called convents, Cloyſters, or Monaſterys. Which names are by many confounded, yet in themſelues they are different. For this word Convent is more largely extended to all Religious houſes, where men or women liue in Communitie; having as it were one body and one ſoule; all being members of

of the ſame bodie, vnder one Superiour; or as branches of the ſame ſtocke, all concurring to the common good of the Communitie.

This word Cloyſter, as ſome will haue it, commeth from the Cloyſters which are ordinarily in Religious houſes, or becauſe commonly their houſes are builded cloiſter wiſe, foure ſquare; repreſenting vnto vs the heauenly citie that is deſcribed in the Apocalipſe to be foure ſquare: but it ſeemes rather to come from encloſure, wherby Religious perſons were ſeparated from ſecular People, whence moſt commonly the houſes of the Carthuſians are called Cloyſters.

This word Monaſterie, commeth, as Nauarre ſaith, from Monachus a Monke: becauſe

Monkes

Monkes did liue in ſuch houſes. But Philo the Iew, who liued in the time of the Apoſtles faith, in every ſolitary manſion you may find a holy houſe *which they call a Monaſterie, or place of ciuilitie & grauitie, wherein ſeparated from others and in ſolitude they are inſtructed in the miſteries of a chaſt and holy life.* Where he ſpeakes of Religious Perſons, ſo that Monaſterie is no other, than a place of ſolitude: which Chryſoſtome explicates thus: *Monaſteries are the moſt certaine ſeats of teares: where are ſaccloath and aſhes, where is ſolitude, no mirth, but contempt of all things, faſting and lying on the ground.*

Now the houſes of this third Order, may be called convents, becauſe they liue in Communities vnder their lawfull Superiours: but more properly, Cloiſters,

Cloisters, especially where they are enclosed, or Monasteries frõ the contẽplatiue life, which they lead: as hath bene declared in the first part.

QVEST. II.

What is the necessitie of Superiours?

NAture doth seeme to teach vs, that no good commonweale, no familie can wel stand without a head, or one that may governe the rest. The Bees may teach vs this, who are alwayes governed by one who is the principall or King amongst them. And the cranes are directed by one leader, whence S. Hierome saith; *The cranes follow one, for being induced by the light of nature, they know that it is vnprofitable for them to follow*

to follow more than one. And therfore the 1. Councell of Challons did ordaine, that there should not be two Abbots in the ſame Monaſterie, leaſt vnder the pretenſe of power, diſſention and ſcandall should ariſe amongſt the Religious. In like mãner all the ſtarres take their light from the Sunne; and generally in all things there is ſome chiefe head whereby the the reſt are governed. Wherfore as it is neceſſarie that in every citie there be but one governour, in a familie, one head: in a shippe, one Pilote: ſo in Religious famililies, it is neceſſarie that there be but one Prelate, or Superiour: by whom all the reſt are to be obedient in all things, that concerne their Rule and Profeſſion: whence S. Bernard in his Rule, ſaith. *Whatſoeuer Man in the place of God commandeth (if it be not certaine*

taine that it is offensiue to God) is no otherwise to be receiued: than if God had commanded it. And in another place he saith. Whether God or man Gods vicar doe giue any command: with the like reason we must obey them. And our holy Father hath the same whē he saith. My most deare Brethren, accomplish at the first word, the thing commanded: doe not expect to haue it reiterated vnto you, nor pleade any impossibilitie, nor iudge any difficultie to be in the thing commanded; for although I should command you any thing aboue your strength, yet holy Obedience will not want force in you. Neither ought you to consider Whom or What qualitie he is, who commandeth such things, but only that he is your Prelate. Amongst other things. which the diuine goodnesse hath vouchsafed to grant me, he hath giuen me this Grace; that I would as

diligently

 A declaration of the third
diligently obey to a Novice of one houre, if he were given me for my Guardian; as to the most ancient and Discreet Brother of the house. For the subiect ought not to consider his Prelate as a man: but as him for whose loue he is subiect. For how much more contemptible he is, that is Superiour; by so much more pleasing is the humilie of the soule that obeyes him. In his Testament he hath these words. *I will firmely obey the Minister Generall of this Fraternitie, & that Guardian whom he shall please to giue me, and will be so captiuated in his hands: that I may not goe or doe any thing, without his Obedience and will, because he is my Lord.* O humble Saint pray for vs thy children that we may truly follow thy example.

QVEST.

QVEST. III.

How the Superiours of this Order are to be called.

TO some this may seeme a superfluous Question; for that it makes nothing, how they be called, so they haue power to command, and governe the Communitie; the Authoritie being the thing, which is necessarily annexed to the place of a Superiour, wherfore it makes not much provided that they be lawfull Superiours, sutable to the governement of the Communitie.

But because that in some places they are called Abbesses, and in some places Mothers, and that in the Rule it is expressely set downe that they shoulbe called Mothers; and some haue doub-

ted

ted of this, I haue thought good to ſpeake a word or two of it.

1. This difference rather proceeds from the common eſteeme of people, for in themſelues they are all one, Abbeſſe being an Hebrew word ſignifying in our language Mother. And whether they be called one or other, their power is the ſame; vnleſſe we ſhould ſpeake of Abbeſſes who are conſecrated.

2. As there are ſeuerall ſorts of this third Oder, as hath bene shewed in the firſt part, ſome encloſed and ſome not encloſed, the Superiours of the one may be called Abbeſſes, of the other Mother: as is practiſed in Spaine and Italie, which diffecence we may find in the Martirologe of our Order, where ſome of them are called Abbeſſes, and ſome Mothers.

3. Pope Leo who confirmed this Rule, doth vse this name of Abbesse to those of the third Order: as in his Bull *Exponi nobis* 22. Decem. 1516. whith he directs to his beloued Daughters in Christ, the Abbesses and Nunnes of S. Clare &c. and of the third Order of S. Francis: and in his Bull. *Dudum Fœlicis* 22. May 1517. he puts downe the distinctiõ afore said, granting to the Abbesse or mother to the Nunnes or sisters all the Priviledges that were giuen to the Abbesse & Nunnes of the poore Clars. The like doth Clement the 7. in his Bull *Ad Vberes fructus.*

4. Not with standing that clause of the Rule, that the Superiours of the men should be called locall Ministers; yet in places where they haue formal Conuents, they are called Guardians,

dians, euen as the Superiour in the first Order. And why should not the Superiour in Monasteries of Women, that lead a perfect Religious life with enclosure be called Abbesses.

But some will aske, why then hath the Pope put downe in the Rule that they should be called Mothers. I answere that at that time the Religious of this Order were not generally enclosed, as may be seene by other points of the Rule, as I will shew hereafter, but in progresse of time this Order encreased both in number, as also in Regular obseruance: and therfore they haue deserued this name, and so haue bene stiled as aboue said.

QVEST.

QVEST. IV.

To whom the Election of the Abbesse doth belong.

IT is a common opinion of all, that generally speaking the Election of the Abbesse belongeth to the Communitie: who will the more willingly submit themselues, by how much it is at their choise; and indeed it seemes conformable to the freedome of a Religious state, for as they haue freely and voluntarily submitted themselues vnder the yoake of Obedience, to their lawfull Superiours: so also it is convenient, that they haue free choise of such Superiours, as are set over them. And afterward they haue no reason to murmure against such and such Superiours,

when they themselues haue made choise of them: and although that some one or two haue not given their voice or suffrage for the Election of such a one, yet because the most part did giue their voices, they as members of the same body ought to conforme themselues to the rest.

I said (generally) because the Councell of Trent sess. 25. commandeth that in this, the constitutions of every Order and Monasterie should be observed: and therfore occording to the Rule of this third Order the Superiours may vpon iust occasions ordaine an Abbesse: as in case of erecting a new Monasterie; or in case that the Cõmunitie cannot agree, or that there be none fitting for it in the Monasterie: nay at any time that the Abbesse is wanting either by death, or by continuall

nuall ſickneſſe or inabilitie of body or minde or ſuch like, they may ordaine one in her place, vntill the election may conveniently be made. I will briefly ſet downe ſome Rules concerning this election.

1. The Provinciall or his Commiſſarie viſitour his delegate doth propound vnto them the neceſſitie of electing one, who may ſupply the place of the Abbeſſe, who now is to reſigne her office; adviſing them to make choiſe of ſuch a one as may be moſt for the benefit of the Communitie, and moſt to the glory of God: one as neere as they can of the ſame convent, who knowes the governement of the Cõmunitie, and who by their good example and prudence may keepe it in the ſame ſtate: not ſo much weighing her ſanctitie, as her

discretion and prudence: where both meete their is happinesse, but where neither, there is miserie; a punishment some times permitted by God; which to prevent they ought to haue recourse to prayer, invocating the grace of the holy Ghost; and to this end he that presides in the Election doth sing Masse of the holy Ghost; and all the Communitie are to Communicate for that intention. Which done they proceed to their election.

Here we may note, that ordinarily the Superiours doe command that none, after that time, doe speake together concerning this Election: which is so strictly observed in S. Dominickes Order, that it is forbidden vnder mortall sinne that any of the cõmunitie should speake, treat or write of it for the space of 24. houres

houres before the election. To the end that eachone may proceed in the election, according to God, and their owne Conſcience & not by the perſuaſions of others.

3. The fiſters ought to chooſe one, that is 48. yeares old, (if there be any ſuch in the Monaſterie, that is capable of the place) and 8. yeares of profeſſion; but in caſe that there be none ſuch, they may chooſe one that is aboue 30. yeares old, and 5. yeares of Profeſſion as that holy Councell of Trent hath ordayned.

4. The ſame Councell hath ordayned, that this Election be made by ſecret votes either by word of mouth or by writing to be taken by the Provinciall or whom he ſhall appoint; with two witneſſes before the grate of the Quire, or ſome other convenient place.

5. All the Religious, who haue

bene in the habit three yeares, are to giue their ſuffrage in this election and cannot without iuſt occaſion be excluded; and this is ordayned: becauſe thoſe who giue their ſuffrage ought to haue ſome knowledge of the merit and qualities of the ſiſter who is to be chooſen: which they could not well haue before that time.

But ſome will aske, whether the Lay Siſters are to giue their voices, in the Election of the Abbeſſe: I anſwere that there is no law that forbids it; But in this the Cuſtome of each Province is to be obſerued.

6. If two parts of three giue their ſuffrage, without any farther delay the Preſident of the Election may and ought to confirme the Abbeſſe ſo choſen, but if leſſe than two parts of three, ſo

that

that least halfe of the community, giue their votes it is sufficient (vnlesse some will reclaime) to giue the Confirmation; and when any one reclaimes, the President according to equitie may proceed to confirming or not confirming. And if at any time there be any delay, the party so chosen, may exercise the authoritie which is due to her Office; as for benediction of the Abbesses, which is vsed in those Abbesses who were perpetuall, custome hath taken it away especially in those who are but for a certaine time.

Lastly It is not necessary, that those who are to be chosen be virgins, or lawfully born, but widdowes and such as descend from heretickes or such like, may be chosen, only infamous persons are excluded; or those

who by any cenſure of the Church are made vncapable; as thoſe who receiue, or concurre to the receiving of any one that by force is compelled to come to Religion.

Note here that the whole Communitie may by way of Compromiſſion, committ this Election to the Provinciall, or his Commiſſarie, & thoſe whom they ſhall chooſe, ſhalbe eſteemed as choſen by the whole Communitie.

QVEST. V.

How long are the Abbeſſes to continne in their Office?

THe Abbeſſes ſo elected, & Confirmed; cannot be perpetuall, both by vertue of the Rule,

Rule, as alſo by vertue of many decrees, that haue beene made by the Popes in this cauſe: But they are to be choſē euery three yeare, that is they are to haue an elec&tió every three yeare in which election she that was Abbeſſe, may be choſen againe, nay Portell ſaith, that the Abbeſſes who haue founded a Monaſterie, may be continued twentie yeares, and may be againe afterward choſen.

This libertie of Election is now for the moſt part obſerued in the Monaſteries of Religious women, which are ſubiect to our Order. I know ſome doe diſlike this alteration or change, for diuer reaſons, which I will here briefely ſet downe.

1. They alleadge, that it hath bene the common practiſe of Gods Church, to haue them per-

petuall: But whatsoeuer the custome hath bene, we see ordinarily, that the Popes for the good of the Church or Religion doe many times change such or such things, which concerne the exteriour governement of Religion. And this may rather serue for an argument on the contrary, for without all doubt, had not there bene sufficient reasons and motiues of this alteration, the Popes would neuer haue permitted it.

2. By this perpetuity of Superiours, many occasions of ambition, and contention are taken away. But it seemes to me, that this is a poore obiect of ambition, where their is but a shaddow of dignitie, in substance nothing but care and labour: which hath bene one of the causes why the Pope hath limitted this time, that each one might beare the Burden, at

least

leaſt in their turnes: the Office of a Superiour being a place of much diſtractions, inquietude and care.

3. An Abbeſſe or Mother in the ſpace of three yeares, ſcarce knowes what belongs to their Office, and in ſo short time, hardly hath courage to ſpeake with that libertie, and fervour, as they might doe, if they were for their liues. This perhaps in Generall Superiours may haue ſome apparence, but not in locall; who are choſen by the communitie, as hauing age and ſufficient experience in all things that concerne the governement of the houſe; beſides their ſtatutes & ordinãces are the ſame, as being made in the Chapters, and not to be altered by them. In great Monaſteries indeed by reaſon of the Rents, Dominions, and other troubles, there

might be some difficultie in this point. As for their freedome to speake, a generous and Religious spirit, will speake as well in one weeke as in a yeare, and the base dejected spirit, neuer. And to this we may adde that this fault is incident aswell to one, as to the other; but in one there is a remedie in the other not; for it is much more easy to support them three yeares, than all the dayes of their life.

4. It is easier to find one that is capable of the office, than to find many. But this rarely occurres; and when it doth occurre, those who were before may be continued as is aboue said.

5. Experience teacheth vs, that all changes are dangerous, and it is a common saying; it were happy that good Superiours should be immortall. True it is, that all

changes

changes are dangerous; for every one hath not the ſame diſpoſition, and therfore to avoid this they haue their ſtatutes, & manner of gouernement ſet downe vnto them; which they are to obſerue, and if they doe not: according to the qualitie of their fault, they may be punished or put out of their Office, in the yearely Viſits; or by the Provinciall, as he ſhall ſee good. And by this meanes they retaine as it were an immortall Superiour. For only ſuch are, or ought to be choſen, who are of ſufficient age, Diſcreet, capable both by word, and example, to draw on others: and ſo by their Election, they alwayes continue in the Superiour the ſame devotion and fervour in a manner immortall. Whereas thoſe who are perpetuall, by age and debilitie, doe

many

many times become vncapable to to performe their Office. I doe not ſpeake this as cõdemning the cuſtome of other places, but only to shew with what reaſon the Popes haue ordayned this triennall Election.

QVEST. VI.

What is the Authoritie of Abbeſſes?

1. THe Abbeſſes ſo elected & confirmed, haue power to governe their Monaſteries in all things, that appertaine to the direction of the Communitie, & adminiſtration of tẽporall things according to their Rule: excepting thoſe things which are not ſutable to their ſex & Condition.

2. This power is not a ſpirituall Iuriſdiction, but like a domeſti-

call,

call, or directiue such as a Father hath over his children, or familie; for as a Father of a familie hath a temporall power, to governe his familie, by commanding, punishing, and compelling them, in all things to the convenient disposition of his familie; so the Superiours in Religion, haue power to command, correct, and governe the Communitie, in all things that concerne the due governement of their state; which power radically proceeds, as is said before, from the wills of them, who haue voluntarily submitted themselues, to such Religious Power, by vertue of their Profession.

3. The Abbesses may receiue the Profession of Nouices; it being the custome not only in this Order, but also in S. Clares, S. Brigits, & Carmelits, & other Orders; wherein they vse no iuridicall

ridicall authoritie, (which resides only in the Provinciall or Generall, and is not competent with their sex) but is a ministeriall act, and externe declaration, whereby it is made knowne that the Nouice, according to her voluntarie Profession, is accepted in the name of the Church, and of lawfull Superiours; who doe approue of this act; by vertue of which approbation, the act is made valide; the Abbesse having but the ministring of this act, by permission of Superiours: for the more commodious performance of it, and for the greater reuerence to the immediate Superiour. It being sufficient that the Provinciall, or some other in his place who hath this authoritie, be present for to ratifie the act. For many times the vowes of Religious persons, were made in the presence of the

Superiour,

Superiour, & being written, were laid vpon the Altar. And when they say, *And to you R. Mother* the Obedience there promised is to be vnderstood according to the Rule approved by the Church, & authoritie that she hath.

4. In regard of their vow, the Abbesse may command them in vertue of holy Obedience: and in such commands may oblige vnder mortall sinne; to wit, when it is in some weightie matter, concerning the governement of the communitie: which is to be considered from the grauitie and maner, wherein the transgression of such commands is contrary to the common good, and externall observance and discipline of Religion. For it is not to be vnderstood that the Superiours commãd allwayes obliges either vnder mortall or veniall sinne,

ſinne, vnleſſe there be ſufficient reaſon and grounds. True it is that according to perfection each one ought to obey to all the commands of Superiours; and if they doe not; Superiours may and ought to punish it ſeverely: for diſobedience even in little things, is the way to all evill in Religion.

5. Although it be certaine, that Abbeſſes haue no authoritie by vertue of their office to giue any diſpenſation which belongs to Paſtorall iuriſdiction, yet Superiours may cõmit vnto them ſuch autoritie, that they may diſpenſe with, or rather, as Henriquez ſaith, declare the Superiours will concerning their obligation of faſte. In this manner Paulus 5. granted leaue to the Abbeſſes of the poore clares, to diſpenſe with their Religious in the faſts of the

Rule.

Rule; when they shall see that through debility, or other lawfull cause, they cannot conveniently obserue their fasts and abstinences, & this not only in case of necessitie, which needs no dispensation, but on any reasonable cause, according to their iudgement: as when other wise, they cannot well obserue the acts of the Communitie. And Pius 5. gaue leaue, that Superiours might dispēse in the fasts of the Church, or Rule, for eating of flesh or egges, according to the iudgement of the Phisition: and in like manner the Superiour Abbesses of the third Order may doe, because they enioy all, and singular the Priviledges of the first, and second Order and the sisters may in this without scruple follow what their Abbesses shall iudge expedient. Although if this were

were for a continuance, they ought to haue recouſe to higher Superiours, or to their Confeſſours, who many times, haue ſuch authoritie giuen vnto them by their Prouincialls.

6. In like manner, vpon iuſt grounds, they may alſo diſpenſe with the Siſters, in ſaying the diuine Office: eſpecially in changing it to the office of the lay Siſters: as is aboue ſaid in the Order of S. Clare; which alſo Pius 5. did grant to the firſt Order; to wit that by diſpenſation of Superiours the Brothers who cannot ſay the diuine Office, may ſatisfie their obligation, by ſaying the Office of the lay Brothers.

7. The Abbeſſe or Mothers may irritate and make void, all the vowes that any of her ſubiects, ſhall make without her leaue,

leaue, and consent: in the same manner, as a Father of a familie, may doe with his children, who are vnder age; or a husband with his wife: for the Religious by vertue of their profession, as is said before, are subject to their Abbesse, as children to their Father: and wiues to their husbands; in as much as concernes their Rule and Profession.

8. Although the Abbesses haue no iurisdiction properly, yet they in some manner excommunicate, that is sequester any one from the communitie, depriue them of Communion, and by way of correction shut them vp in some remote place, which commonly they call the House of discipline: which some times is necessary, at least to terrifie those, who will not carry the sweet yoake of loue.

I omit

I omit for brevities ſake, many other things, which as they occurre may be done according to the adviſe and counſell of the Confeſſour, or referred to higher Superiours.

QVEST. VII.

What is the Abbeſſes charge?

HAving ſpoken of their Authoritie, it is expedient to adde a word or two of their charge or care, that they ought to haue, over their ſubiects: and to this end, I will firſt ſet downe ſome certaine Rules, and afterwards produce the letter that our holy Father did write to B. Elias concerning this ſubiect.

1. It belongs to good Superiours to know the nature, and diſpoſition of their Subiects: according

cording to the councell of the wiseman. Pro. 27. *know diligently the countenance of thy cattel, and consider thy flockes.* That is, as Saint Hierome explicates it. *Take diligent care of those whom thou art to Rule, know the minds and actions of each; and if thou shall find in them any vice, punish them quickely.*

2. They are to teach their subiects, by word & example; which is the counsell of the Apostle, to Titus. *These things speake, and exhort, and rebuke with all authoritie, for to this end authoritie is given to thee.*

3. They ought to be vigilant & carefull over their subiects, for as the Apostle saith Heb. 13. *They watch as being to render account for their soules*: they beare the burthen, and care of each soule, that is subiect vnto them; and must answere to God for them, verely

all

all the loue, reuerence, & respect, that Religious can giue to their Superiour, is not sufficient to countervaile this.

4. They ought with Charitie, and prudence to correct those who doe amisse: so the Apostle adviseth: Timothy. ep. 1. c. 5. *Them that sinne reproove before all: that the rest also might haue feare.* Saint Gregorie much condemnes the Superiours, who for humaine respects doe for beare to reprehend the faults of a Communitie. Oftentimes imprudent Superiours, fearing to loose humane favour, dare not speake freely the things that are right, and according to the voice of Truth it selfe. *They now no more doe watch their flocks, as it becommeth a Pastour to doe, but as a mercenarie.* And certainely the Omission of correction in due time, hath bene the cause of ruine

and

and confusion to many Monasteries, but of this more in the eighth Chapter.

5. They ought to defend and maintaine the statutes, & Decrees of their Superiours; and the good customes of the Monasteries; whence Cassian would haue none to be preferred to such an Office; but such who had learned to command, by being obedient to others: and who had followed the institutions of their elders, that they might teach the yonger.

6. They are to provide the Sisters, of all necessities convenient, according to their Rule and Profession: but more of this in the seauenth Chapter.

Lastly to omit many others, they ought to implore the divine assistance, to the end, that they may performe this office well;

for there is no more efficacious way to performe it well, than prayer: let Saint Bernard be witnesse, who saith, *Reading is profitable to such and instruction is profitable, but much more the grace of the holy Ghost is necessarie, which alone doth teach all things, and this is obtained by prayer.*

To conclude this Question, I will adde the Epistle before mentioned. And I would to God, that it were written, and placed in the celles, and hearts of all Superiours.

The Epistle of our holy Father, to Br. Elias his Vicar Generall.

BRother Elias in all things that thou dost, I very much commend vnto thee, charitie and patience: for thou must suffer many

many things and the burthen which thou doeſt beare vpon thy shoulders is great, and heavy; to wit the ſoules of many. In the old law, the high Prieſt did beare the Rationall of iudgemẽt, which did hang from his shoulders, on his breaſt, the names of the twelue Tribes of Iſrael. Signifying in this, that as the Prelate doth carry his ſubiects vpon his shoulders; ſo it is neceſſarie, that he carry them in his breaſt: for he cannot wel endure thoſe, whom he leaveth to loue. Ieſus Chriſt our Lord when he did giue the care of the Church to S Peter, before he would deliver him the sheepe, did examine him of loue. Wherfore ſee that none of thy Brothers doe offend: but if any doe offend: let him not goe from thy face without mercy and correction: And becauſe thou art ä

Phiſition, offer medicine to the infirme: for as our Lord ſaith, they that are in health neede not a Phiſition, but they thar are ill at eaſe watch, admonish, labour, feede, loue, expect, feare: fare well in our Lord.

QVEST. VIII.

To whome theſe Abbeſſes are ſubiect?

ACcording to the common law of the Church, all Religious are ſubiect to the Bishop; but the Popes for iuſt reaſon, haue exempted ſome Monaſteries both of men and women, from their Power; putting them immediatly vnder his authoritie, others vnder the Superiours of their owne Orders; as he hath done the poore Clares, and this

third

third order; as hath bene more amply declared in the first part. So that the Abbesse, Mother, or Superiour, is immediatly subiect to the Provinciall: who for this respect; as being one of the Communitie, may giue his voice in the Election of the Cõmunitie, which also he may commit to his Commissarie; who other wise hath it not.

As they are subiect to the Provinciall, so they are subiect to such Commissarie Visitours as he shall send vnto them, during the time that they are in their visit: as also to all those who by the statutes, haue Provinciall authoritie as Viccar-Provincialls, or Commissarie Provincials: for these are all vnderstood vnder the name of Provinciall, whose authoritie they beare. But in the Rule by the Visitours is vnderstood such Visi-

tors, as are sent by the generall Superiours, who from the time that they receiue their Commission vntill twenty dayes after the Chapter, or according to the letters which are given them, haue full authoritie, over the Brothers and Sisters of the whole Province. And they are bound to obey them.

Note here that when any Monasterie is said to be subiect to the Guardians of the place where they art; it is not to be vnderstood, that they haue any iurisdiction, or power of superioritie over the house, but only that the Provinciall doth commit this care to them, for the assistance of the Abbesses in their gouernement: and principally for the spirituall comfort of the Religious; who may haue some necessity either of counsell, or instruction; or for to

satisfie

satisfie their consciences, either by himselfe or by others; as he shall iudge expedient. And to this effect they haue full power to sẽd whom they thinke convenient, for to heare the Confessions either of one, or all Sisters, and this by permission of Superiours.

QVEST. IX.

How are the other officers to be chosen?

THe Rule in many places referres the Religious to their statutes, there by in a manner including the statutes in the Rule; which shewes a great latitude of the Rule, and more than most Rules haue. And now in this place referres them to their statutes, concerning the Election of other officers which I will brief-

ly here ſet downe.

In all Monaſteries there is one choſen, to helpe and aſſiſt the chiefe Superiour, who in our Order is called viccareſſe, not ſo much to command, as to beare & ſuſtaine the burthen, and charge of the Abbeſſe: for as the wiſe man ſaith Pro. 18. *Brother that is holpen of Brother is a ſtrong tower.* If theſe two ioyne in one accord, for the generall good of the Cõmunitie, all things of Religion will goe well; peace and charitie wilbe maintained, for it lies much in the viccareſſe to farther it, by accomplishing the Abbeſſes commands, and complying with her in all her actions, approving of all that is well done, and prudently concealing her defects, vntill she find fit occaſion to haue them remedied For it is much better that ſome little thing should paſſe,

contrary

contrary to the gouernement of the houſe, than that the peace and charitie of the communitie should be hindred as ordinarily it happens where they two doe not agree.

Wherfore, the viccareſſe ought to loue, honour and reuerence her Abbeſſe, who ought alſo to haue confidence in her, in all things that are expedient, for the good of the Monaſterie.

As for her authoritie it extendeth no farther, than what the Abbeſſe or cuſtome of Religion shall giue her, which, becauſe in ſeverall places ther are ſeverall Cuſtomes, I omit.

Their Election in former times was in the power of the Abbeſſe, but becauſe of ome abuſes herein committed; it is now the cuſtome that they be choſen as the Abbeſſe, to wit by the Ele-

ction of the Communitie, or Provincial; as is declared in the question of the Election of the Abbesses.

Besides the Viccaresse their are chosē certaine Discreets wher of I haue spoken before; whose Election is according to the Custome of each Province: in this third Order they are chosen by the Abbesse and Discreets are confirmed by the Provinciall.

In like manner, the Mistris of Novices, and Portresse, are chosen; and great care is to be had in their Election, for they are two offices of great importance in Religion; on the Mistris depends the good of a whose communitie; for if Novices be not well gronnded in Religion, hardly they will proue good Religious; and if the Portresse be not Discreet, and prudent,

many,

many inconveniences may come to Religion.

CHAP. VI.

Of the manner of conversing within and without.

WHeras the Brothers & Sisters of this Fraternitie, ac called of Penance: it behoueth them to abstaine from all Curiositie, aswel in appparell, as in all other things: and according to the Counsell of the Prince of the Apostles S. Peter laying aside the vain

ornaments of this world, they ought not to weare any other garment, but what is humble and neceſſary for the covering of their body. They ought alſo by all meanes to avoid the acceſſe to the Courts of Princes, lords or ladies where (according to the teſtimonie of our Sauiour) the delights of this world are to be found. Alſo they ought never to be preſent at danſing, playes, ſports, & other vanities of players. They muſt alſo be ſparing in words, and diſcourſe, which very ſeldome are multiplied without ſinne.

And

And aboue all things they muſt avoid lying and ſwearing, according to the commandement of our lord. vnleſſe it be for Peace, Fairh, Calumnie, or Iniurie and giving Teſtimonie. And every day at Eueming, they ought to examine if they haue made any lye, or taken any oath, and for every one of them, they muſt ſay three times the *Pater Noſter.*

EXPOSITION.

IN *this Capter are contayned many things, that doe no way belong to Religious encloſed; but to thoſe who liue in communitie without*

thout enclosure which I must omit, because this worke is intended for such as are closed, and some others haue bene spoken of before; wherfore I will only here deuide the Caper, and speak of as many points, as shalbe necessary for the exposition of the Rule.

First the Rule calls this congregatiō a Fraternitie, in the same manner as our holy Father calles the Order a Fraternitie, which signifieth a congregation gathered together in mutuall and Fraternall loue, and concord. and from hence they are called Brothers and Sisters.

2. This Fraternitie or Order is called the Order of Penance, and of this we haue sufficiently spoken in the first part.

3. The Religious are to auoid all curiosity in their apparell, and lay aside all secular and vaine cloathes: and this we haue sufficiently

declared

declared before in ſpeaking of the habit.

4. They ought not to goe to princes courts &c. Which is not for thoſe who are encloſed. For in this third Order there are Religious Monaſteries, where encloſure is not obſerued; as in the firſt part hath bene declared.

5. They muſt be ſparing in words &c. of which we need not to ſay more, having done it ſufficiently, in the Queſtion of ſilence.

6. They ought not to lie nor on any occeſion sweare; but vpon iuſt occaſions, as for peace, faith calumnie Iniury or giuing teſtimonie.

7. They are to ſay 3. Pater Noſters in penance for euery lie, or oath that they ſhall commit, and this at night in the examine of their conſcience, wher of we haue ſpoken before.

It reſts only here to ſpeake of the ſixth and ſeauenth point.

QVEST.

QVESTION I.

Whether to lye be a great Offence?

THe holy ſcripture much condemnes lying, as may beſeeme wiſd. 1. *The mouth that lyeth killeth the ſoule.* & Apoc. 22. *Euery one that loueth, and maketh lies, is excluded from the kingdome of heauen.* And in the precedent Chapter. *He that maketh lies ſhall not enter into the celeſtiall Ieruſalem.* And the phenix of our ſchoole Scotus holdeth that ſuch is the malice of lying, that God himſelfe cannot diſpenſe with it: the diuell being the author of lies. Whence we may gather how reaſonably our holy Father hath forbidden it in this Rule, not that he thought Religious Perſons would

would be ſo forgetfull of their Salvation, as to commit a mortall ſinne; but fearing that by cuſtome of lying in light matters they might offend in greater; and therfore he generally forbids all ly ing.

For every lye is not a mortall ſinne, but ſome lyes are veniall, as we shall shew when firſt we haue declared what a lye is. None can tell vs better than S. Auguſtine who ſaith. *He lyes, who contrary to what he hath in his minde, doth ſpeake any thing with a will to deceiue any one.* And Cicero ſaith that *a Lye is a falſe ſpeaking of words with intention of deceiuing.* Lo that two things neceſſarilie concurre to a lye, firſt that the ſpeaker know what he ſaith to be falſe, whence if any one affirme a thing to be true, which in it ſelfe is falſe, if he beliene it to be true, he

doth not properly lye; becauſe the words are conformable to the mind. The 2. is that he doe it with intention to deceiue any one, for according to this intention is the gravitie of the ſinne. Whence the Divines doe diſtinguish three ſorts of lyes; to wit Ieſting, officious, and pernicious.

Ieſting lyes, are ſuch as are ſpoken without offence to any one; only to delight and recreate thoſe to whom they ſpeake, which properly are not lyes, as S. Auguſtine teacheth, becauſe there is no intention to deceiue any one.

Officious lyes are ſuch as hurt none, but are ſpoken for the vtilitie, or profit of ſome one; as to excuſe another, or ſuch like, which generally ſpeaking are but veniall ſinnes.

But the Pernicious lye, which

is

is ſpoken to the preiudice or hurt of any one, ot notably to the preiudice of the truth is mortall ſinne or veniall according to the nature of the hurt, or wrong that is done.

Now it ought to be farre from Religious Perſons to commit an offence in this laſt kind, to wit to the preiudice or wrong of any ones and becauſe they tend to perfection they ought to avoid all lyes that is of ſet purpoſe, with intention to deceiue any one.

QVEST.

QVEST. II.

Whether it be lawfull at any time to ſweare?

NOne can doubt but that in ſome caſes it is lawfull to ſweare, provided that the three conditions concurre which the Prophet Ieremie ſets downe c. 4. *Thou ſhalt ſweare our Lord liueth, in truth, and in iudgement, and in Iuſtice.* That is to ſay, in all lawfull oathes, there ought to concurre, Truth, Iudgement, and iuſtice. If there be not truth: it is periurie; for he that ſweareth what is falſe, is a periurer. Alſo all oathes ought to to be made with iudgement, that is with diſcretion and conſideration, otherwiſe thoſe who vſe thē, doe indanger themſelues to ſinne mortally, by ſwearing

ting falſly. Laſtly they ought to be in iuſtice, that is in a lawfull matter; for elſe one should ſinne mortally. To this this we may adde that no oathes are to be vſed without neceſſitie, which may make an oath not only lawfull, but meritorious.

Whence as the Rule declares, one may lawfully take an oath, when it is for the conſervation of peace, or fidelitie to ones Prince, or Magiſtrats, or in regard of ſome thing that is committed to our charge; as for example, in viſits when the Viſitors may chooſe ſome, to take the votes of others, binding them by an oath to keepe ſecret, what hath paſt concerning thoſe votes. Sometimes alſo being accuſed of any falſe thing, they may cleare themſelues by oath, or alſo others ſo accuſed. Laſtly being called by their lawfull

full Superiours to giue testimony of the truth, they may take an oath to confirme their word.

Except these cases our holy Father would not haue his children to sweare at all, because of the danger that is in it; which is the reason, that S. Augustine giues, why our Saviour did forbid swearing, saying. *Our Lord admonished vs not to sweare, not because it is a sinne to sweare, what is truth, but because it is a most grieuous sinne to sweare falsely where into he that is accustomed too sweare to soone falleth.* And we read Eccl. 23. *Let not thy mouth be accustomed to sweareing, for there be many falles in it.*

But some will aske, why our holy Father did put all these things, which are in this Chapter into his Rule: when these for the most part belong to all good Christians. Wherto I answere, that

that all Religious Rules doe containe aſwell good things to be followed, as evill things to be avoided. And thoſe who made ſuch Rules did put in what they thought neceſſary for the good of ſoules. So S. Benedict in his Rule ſets downe all the commandements. And what elſe almoſt is contained in this Chapter here; & particularly this of ſwearing: forbidding his children to ſweare at all, leaſt perhaps they ſhould forſweare themſelues.

QVEST. III.

What Penances the Religious ought to undergoe when they faile in the aforeſayd faults?

OVr holy Father hath ſet downe as a precept of the Rule, that in the examine of their Conſciences,

Consciences, they should particularly consider, whether they had done that they should doe penãce for; not that such Penance is satisfactorie for the sinne past, but by way of remedie, or meanes to breake the evill custome of sinning: to which end S. Bernard saith. *Learne to iudge thy selfe, and to accuse thy selfe, with thy selfe, often also to condemne thy selfe, and doe not let thy selfe goe vnpunished.* So that it is not sufficient to consider our sinnes, but we must search out the rootes of our inclinations, and Passions; and by a pious correction, labour to amend them. Admirable is the example of Eusebius the Monke, in this kind; as also many other saincts who by such kind of pennances, haue overcome themselues in many occasions of sinne. Especially by doing some contra-

ry

ry act; as for example when any one should be moved with a curiositie in their habits. Let them 1. consider the vanitie therof. 2. Propound vnto themselues the example of our Sauiour. 3. By way of Penance to take some poore habit; and putting it on, or laying it by them, say. *Any thing is fitting to cover a rotten chest, which containes nothing but meat for Wormes.*

In like manner if they find thēselues given to vaine speeches, lyes, or swearing, they may by way of Penance, as it were, injoyne themselues, silence, for so long time. The like may be said of other sinnes in their kind. I will giue some few examples, for all the seaven capitall sinnes, leaving the rest to the devotion of the Reader.

Against Pride 1. we ought to consider our proper vilitie, and

baſeneſſe; aſwell in body as in ſoule, by ſinne; what we haue bene, what we are, and what we ſhall be. 2. we may conſider the humilitie of our Sauiour, our B. Lady, and be confounded in our ſelues, to ſee the Pride of our duſt and ashes. 3. for Penance, we may kiſſe the ground, from whence we came, or doe ſome humble office, or labour.

Againſt Envy. 1. we ought not to loue thoſe things; which the world loveth; becauſe they are the occaſions of envy. 2. we may conſider, that if thoſe whom we envie, had not that which we deſire: ſome other would haue it. 3. by way of Penance we ought to reconcile our ſelues to them, & doe ſome act of charitie to them.

Againſt Anger. 1. we ought to vſe a prudent premeditation of our words or deeds, that we may

be

be prepared with Patience. 2. entring into our ſelues, we cannot but be ashamed and confounded, to ſee our ſelues goe ſo farre beyõd the limits of reaſon; which we may the better conceiue, by beholding how vnſeemely a thing it is in another. 3. If we can, when occaſion is given to hold our peace; for as Salomon ſaith: *When the wood failes the fire goeth out.* Laſtly by way of Penance, we may make a purpoſe to follow the counſell of ſome one, whom we may chooſe to this effect, to admonish and reprehend vs for this defect: or injoyne ſome corporall Penance.

Againſt Sloath. 1. we muſt ſettle our ſelues to ſpirituall excerciſes, although it be with tediouſneſſe and reluctation; for many times there is more merit in the fight, & labour, to obtaine

deuotion; than in deuotion it selfe. 2. if there be great tediousnesse in our labours, and excercises, we may vse some variety, going from one good worke, to another. 3. by way of Penance; we may moderately chastice our Bodies by discipline, or fasting, it being a law; he that will not worke, deserues to fast.

Against Avarice. 1. we ought to consider, that we haue left all for God. 2. we may set before our eies, the troubles and perplexities that follow riches; the dangers that we fall into by them, and the great profit of Povertie. 3. we ought to put our confidence in God, who will provide for vs, what is necessarie, if not for the body, let vs imagine that he permits it, for our soules good. Lastly by way of Penance; we may depriue our selues of some things,

that

that are neceſſarie for vs, by giving them to the poore, or at leaſt wishing that they had it.

Againſt Gluttony. 1. we ought not to eate or drinke, but at convenient times. 2. we may conſider the great evills, which ordinarily accompany this vice; which makes vs rather like beaſts, than men: yea many times worſe than beaſts. 3. we may conſider the vanitie of it, for the pleaſure therof, is but for a moment, and brings with it many times the ruine of ſoule and body; yea from thence comes moſt diſeaſes. One ſaid wel. *This vice hath killed more men, than the ſword.* Laſtly by way of Penance: they may abſtract ſome neceſſary food, or vſe ſome faſts with diſcretion.

Againſt Luſt. 1. we muſt avoid overmuch familiaritie, eſpecially with evill company. 2. we muſt

nor cherish and pamper the flesh, for in so doing, we arme an enemie against our selues. 3. We must mortifie our senses, especially frõ vnlawfull obiects; and lastly by way of Penance; we may vse some acts of mortification, as disciplines, haire cloth, lying vpon the ground, or such like.

To conclude all, with a generall rule: against all evills we ought to haue recourse to prayer; according to what our holy Father hath here ordayned. And the 3. *Pater nosters* here set dõwne, are to be said in honour of the holy Trinitie, in satisfaction of the three wayes, wherein we offend God, our Neighbour, and our selues, by thought, word & deed.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of visiting and taking care of the sicke.

IF any Brother or Sister of this Fraternitie shall fall sicke; the Minister or Mother of the house, either by themselues, or by some other; are bound once every day, to visit them; and shall diligently cause all things necessarie to be ministred vnto them, out of the commune goods; They are also bound to admonish the sicke party, to accept Penan-

ce, and to make a true conuersion to God: by propounding vnto them, the neerenesse of death; & the strictenesse of the divine Iustice; together With the divine mercy.

EXPOSITION.

IN *this Chapter, there is set downe one, of the most important charges, that belongs to Superiours; to wit the care of the sicke; and the manner how they are to prouide for them; both corporally, and spiritually.*

1. *The Superiours are once a day, to visit the sicke.*

2. *They are to prouide all things necessarie for the sicke, out of the commune charge or rent of the Monasterie, or otherwise.*

3. *They are to take care, that they*

haue

haue the Sacrament, of Penance and Communion.

Lastly they are to assist them spiritually during the time of their sicknesse; by propounding vnto them such things as are necessarie for their saluation.

To the end that each Superiour, may the better vnderstand their charge, in this particular; I will most willingly set downe some things, which may be vsefull in this kind.

QVEST. I.

Whether all the Religious are to visit the sicke?

I neede not here to speake, of the great charitie of our holy Father, who receiued his vocation whilst he was serving the sicke: nor produce many exãples of such, who haue bene singular

in this kind; as S. Elizabeth and others: becauſe as I haue often noted, this worke is intended for ſuch Religious, who are encloſed: and therfore I will only ſpeake of the charitie, which they are to shew to each other. Our holy Father in his firſt Rule commends vnto vs, three things: to wit; that we should be familiar with each other; manifeſt each others neceſſitie; and ſerue each other in ſickneſſe: moving them by this reaſon. If carnall affinitie doth moue men to doe this, much more ſpirituall: wherein we are all members in one body of Chriſt Ieſus. And by the generall and iuſt law of nature: that which thou wouldſt haue done to thy ſelfe, doe to others: which our Sauiour alſo taught vs Mat. 7. *What meaſure you mete, it shalbe meaſured to you againe*: therfore whatſoeuer

you

you will, that men doe to you, doe you also to them. S. Bonaventure tells vs that by doing this act of charitie, we may find Christ himselfe, his words are these. *O soule why art thou anxious all day after Christ? I will shew thee him whom thy soule loueth: truly he lies in the Infirmarie, and there he is in necessitie? there he is tormented: runne; and minister vnto him, take compassion on him for he is infirme.* And Palacius vpon S. Matthew saith. *He who striues to visit the sick, shall hardly be ouercome by the diuell; the infirmitie of the infirme, doth make firme, infirme charitie.* And S. Bernard assureth vs; That charitie is to be seene in nothing so much, as in assisting and helping the sicke. And we may read of an old Hermit, who, being demanded whether it was more pleasing to fast; or serue the sicke in

the infirmarie; answered; *That as charitie was the greatest and most excellent of all vertues, so beleeue me without all doubt, those who serue the sicke, doe merit more in one dayes space, than the other in fasting a whole yeare.* Whence S. Basill did command his Monkes, that they should rather serue the sicke, than to goe read their Psalmes: intimating, that none should abstaine vnder pretense of devotion.

All which I alleage, to shew how reasonable it is, that all religious persons should most willingly vndertake this charge, whē it is committed vnto them: not that every one should take care of the sicke, or goe into the infirmarie at their pleasures; for in all wel governed Monasteries, this is strictly forbidden, & S. Pachomius in his Rule, hath this decree. *None shall dare to visit the sicke,*

without

without leaue of the Superiour: nor any one, how neere soeuer of affinitie or kindred, shall haue power to minister anything vnto them, without the command of the Superiour of the house: and this with good reason; for the Superiour ought to know the time, place, and person convenient, for such occasions: & nothing is to be done in Religion, but by Obedience. Besides by such frequent visits, without necessitie, oftentimes there followeth much distractions & troubles to them, who haue the care to tend the sicke, and much confusion; every one presuming on their owne iudgement, and vndoing what others haue done. Many times in steed of doing an act of charitie, they may hurt, or molest the sicke party, who desires rest and quiet. And all are not capable to doe good vnto the

sicke,

ſicke, but on the contrary, may giue much affliction to the ſicke. And laſtly there may be danger of catching the like diſeaſe, and it were preſumption in any one to expoſe themſelues, to ſuch danger without neceſſitie.

To conclude; as I would haue all to be ready and prompt to doe ſuch acts of charitie, when it shalbe impoſed vpon them: ſo I adviſe all to leaue it to their Superiours, who are bound to take care of the ſicke, as I will shew in the next Queſtion.

QVEST. II.

Whether the Abbeſſes or Superiour be bound to viſit the ſicke?

THat the Superiour or Abbeſſe is bound to take care of the ſicke; is manifeſt in the Rule, and

and although it were not in the Rule, yet by vertue of the contract made in the Profession of any Religious (wherof we haue spoken before on the 2. Chapter) they are bound to it, for as the pupill is bound to obey his Tutor; so the Tutor is bound to provide for his Pupill, in all necessities: As the servant is bound to serue is Master so the Master is bound to provide for them; and as the child is bound to honour his Parents: so the Parents are bound to provide for their children in all occasions. And by the same reason: as a Religious person hath given himselfe, as a servant, pupill, or child, into the hands of his Superiour; so the Superiour is bounde to provide for them; & therfore we may well apply the saying of S. Paul vnto the Superiours. 1. Tim. 5. *If any one haue*

not

not care of their owne, and especially of their domesticals, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidell. If they haue not care of their subiects, who for the loue of God haue submitted themselues vnto them: they doe in a manner denie their faith, and promise, made to them in their Profession, and doe become worse than an Infidell: for being in the place of God, they neglect that which is the principall part of their charge.

Whēcé all Foūders of Religious Orders, haue bene carefull in this point, to insert it in their Rules. S. Basill would that the sicke should be first served in cloaths, meat, and lodging. S. Benedict ordained, that although those who were in health did suffer hunger; yet all things should be sufficiently provided in the Infirmarie. Hugo à Sācto Victore so much esteemed

med of this, that he ſaid. *That Monaſterie doth goe to deſtruction wherein care is not taken for the ſicke: for ſince the Superiour hath no Charitie, he (or ſhe) can haue no perfectiõ.* And S. Gregorie hath the ſame ſaying: *This neglect of the ſicke hath bene the ruine of many Monaſteries.*

With good reaſon the Rule hath laid this charge vpon the Abbeſſes, & that they ſhould doe it every day, leaving it to their deuotiõ to doe it oftener, according as they ſhall ſee neceſſity: which muſt be the rule of their actions for it is not to be vnderſtood, that the Superiours are bound to prouide them all things, but ſuch things as may ſupply their neceſſitie; which S. Bernard deſcribeth thus, *Let their neceſſities be ſatisfied, not ſecularly, nor according to the flesh, but as it becomes the ſeruant of God,* according to their ſtate and

Profeſſion,

Profeſſion, with conſideration of the meanes, and facultie which is to be had in the Monaſterie. It is a very good ſaying *There wilbee no complainct in the Infirmarie, if there be patience in the infirme and Charitie in the ſickemother:* Who in this behalfe doth ſupply the place of the Abbeſſe, and with Charitie ought to ſerue each one, according to their neceſſities which she shall not meaſure with the eie of the ſenſe, or with indiſcreet zeale of the perfection, or rigour of their ſtate; but with the eie of the heart, and compaſſion: doing to them, as she would haue others doe to her: let me conclude this, with the admonition of our holy Father. *I beſeech all my Brethren* (or Siſters) *that in their infirmities, they be not angry, or troubled againſt their Brethren* (or Siſters) *nor very ſollicitouſly to aske Phiſicke, nor over*

much

much desire to deliuer the flesh from death.

Note here if the Abbesse, haue any iust occasion, that she cannot visit the sicke Sisters; she may lawfully, euen according to the Rule, doe it by the Viccaresse, for the Abbesse, & Viccaresse, in this respect, doe beare as it were one person; and in case that she cannot doe it, by the Viccaresse; she may doe it by some other, although it be more conuenient that she doe it her selfe.

QVEST. III.

What the Abbesse is to doe with the sicke Sisters concerning, their Conuersion to God?

BEcause that it is troublesome to the Confessours to come so often into the Enclosure, and that

that many times they may be hindred, that they cannot be alwayes with the ſicke Siſters; as alſo to ſet downe what the Superiour ought to doe in ſuch caſes; I haue thought good here a little more to dilate my ſelfe; aſwell for their helpe, as alſo for the comfort of the ſicke Religious. When then any one falleth ſicke, and that there appeare any danger of death, the Superiour ought firſt to call for the Confeſſour, to heare their Confeſſion, and to helpe & aſſiſt them, in what difficulties they are ſubiect to. And in the end the Confeſſour when he ſees good, may giue them the great Abſolution, the forme here followeth.

The forme of absolution in the article of death.

DOminus noster Iesus Christus, per merita suæ Sacratissimæ Passionis, te absoluat, & gratiam suam tibi infundat; & Ego authoritate ipsius, & Beatorum Apostolorum Petri & Pauli, & summorum Pontificum mihi in hac parte commissa, & tibi concessa; absolvo te ab omni vinculo Excommunicationis, majoris vel minoris, vel interdicti. Restituo te vnioni & participationi Fidelium nec non Sacramentis Ecclesiæ. Eadem authoritate ego absolvo te ab omni transgressione votorum tui Ordinis, & Statutorum Papalium, generalium, Provincialium, localium, & Synodalium quorumcunque. Eadem authoritate ego absolvo te, ab omni divino Officio malè persoluto, horis indebitè transpositis,

positis, vel dimissis: Item eadem authoritate ego absolvo te ab omnibus peccatis tuis, quibus contra Deum, fragilitate humana, ignorãtia, vel malitia deliquisti: concedens tibi remissionem & Indulgentiam plenariam omnium peccatorum tuorum confessorum, & cunctorum de quibus etiam non recordaris aut oblita fuisti, in quantum claves Ecclesiæ se extendant. Item eadem authoritate ego absolvo te à pœnis Purgatorij, quas pro peccatis commissis & delictis in hoc mundo perpetratis meruisti, restituendo te illi Innocentiæ, in qua eras quando Baptizata fuisti. In nomine Patris & Filij & Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

Where we may note, that in case of necessitie, that the partie be presently a dying, and that it is feared she cannot liue, so long as the Confessour is giving of this absolution: it is enough to say.

Ego

Ego absoluo te ab omnibus censuris & peccatis tuis. In nomine Patris, &c.

The next care is to give them the holy Sacrament; or *viaticum*, if neede be: as for the first, it is to be done after the Ordinarie way: only the sicke-Mother is to provide a decent place, to set the B. Sacrament on, with a corporall and wax candle burning by it, and that being set downe, one of the Sisters is to present holy water to the Priest: who sprinckles the sicke party, and the standers by, according to the vsuall custome.

But if it be the *Viaticum*. It is done in a more solemne manner, for then the Chapter Bell is rung, that all the Sisters may gather together, according to the discretion of the Superiour; and all being ready with tapers lighted in their hands; they shall meete the

Priest

Prieſt with the B. Sacrament: and going towards the ſickehouſe, proceſſion wiſe; they ſhall ſay the Pſalme *Miſerere mei Deus*: and when they come into the roome, each one kneeling downe in convenient place, ſhall expect the Benediction of the holy Sacramẽt, which the Prieſt gives, both on the ſicke party, and on them before he lets it downe: then the Prieſt ſprinckles holy water as above.

Then the Prieſt taking the Croſſe, that is before the ſicke party, gives it to her to kiſſe, and ſo invites her to devotion to this holy Sacrament, which now she is to receiue. And all the Sisters having ſaid devoutly the *Confiteor*. The Prieſt ſaith *Miſereatur* &c. and *Indulgentiam* &c. and addes this prayer.

Dominus Ieſus Chriſtus, qui di-

xit

xit Discipulis suis, quæcumque ligaveritis super terram erunt ligata & in cælo, & quæcumque solveritis super terram erunt soluta & in cælo: de quorum numero (quamvis indignos) nos esse voluit; ipse te absolvat per ministerium nostrum ab omnibus peccatis tuis; quæcunque cogitatione, locutione, & operatione, negligenter egisti, & à nexibus peccatorum absolutam perducere dignetur ad regna cælorum. Qui cum Patre & Spiritu sancto vivit & regnat in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

After this the Priest taking the B. Sacrament, the sicke Sister as well as shecan, shall adore it, whilst he sayes.

Domine non sum dignus, ut intres sub tectum meum, sed tantum dic verbo & sanabitur anima mea.

When he giues the holy Hoast he saith.

Accipe charissima soror, Viaticũ

Corporis Domini nostri Iesu Christi: qui te custodiat ab hoste maligno, & perducat ad vitam æternam. Amen.

And then hauing washed his fingers with wine and water he giues it to the sicke sister, and sayes.

Vers. *Dominus vobiscum.*

Resp. *Et cum spiritu tuo.*

Oremus.

DOmine sancte Pater omnipotens æterne Deus, te fideliter deprecamur: vt accipienti sorori nostræ sacrosanctum Corpus Domini Iesu Christi filij tui, tam corporis quàm animæ prosit ad remedium sempiternum. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Benediction.

BEnedicat † te Deus Pater, qui in principio cuncta creauit de nihilo. Bene † dicat te Deus Filius, qui à paterna sede pro te saluanda descendit. Bene † dicat te Spiritus san-

ſanctus, qui in columbę ſpecie in Iordane fluvio in Christo requievit. Ipſe te in veritate ſancti† ficet: quẽ omnes gentes venturum expectant Iudicem: cum eodem Deo Patre, & Spiritu ſancto viventem & regnãtem in ſæcula ſæculorum, Amen.

Note here that although it be not neceſſarie to receiue againe, after this: yet if this danger continue, and that through devotion they deſire to communicate, if the Superiour and Confeſſour iudge it expedient, they may doe it, although that through weakeneſſe they are not able to faſt for faſting in this caſe is not neceſſarie.

After this is done, the Siſters are to returne in the ſame manner as they came, hauing firſt receiued the Benedictõ of the holy Sacrament, if any Hoaſt doth remaine in the Pixis. And in ſteed

 A declaration of the third of the Pſalme *Miſerere*; they may ſay the Hymne. *Te Deum laudamus.*

After this if it chance that the Confeſſour cãnot doe it himſelfe: the Superiour by her ſelfe, or others, may propound theſe pious exhortations if the Confeſſour ſhall iudge it expedient.

Beloved Sister: conſider that we are all ſubiect to the powerfull hand of God, and according to his will, we muſt neceſſarily pay the tribute of death. We came into this world as Pilgrimes, that we might paſſe out of it; not that we ſhould make any manſion in it: but rather that here living well, and meretoriouſly, we might ſerue God, avoid the terrible paines of hell, and obtaine eternall glorie. Acknowledge ſeriouſly with thankeſgiving the benefits which God hath granted you that even in this laſt houre he hath given you

ſenſe

ſenſe and iudgement and not pre-
uented. you with ſuddaine death. O
giue thãks to him for all his benefits,
and flying vnto his infinite mercy,
aske humbly Pardon for your faults
committed. Conſider attentiuely that
in your life time you haue committed
many ſinnes, for which you haue de-
ſerued punishment: and therfore you
ought with patience to ſuſtaine the
paines of this your infirmitie and
death, beoſeeching God that the bitter-
neſſe of y ur preſent ſufferance, may
worke in you remiſſion of your ſinnes;
and that the horrible paine of Purga-
torie, by his mercy, may be turned
into this your affliction.

After this if they be able they make this Proteſtation of their faith taken out of Dionyſius Carthuſianus.

A Protestation of the Faith.

I *Sister N. vnhappy sinner, redeemed by the most precious bloud of our Lord Iesus C. through his infinite goodnesse and mercy, and not any way by my merit; doe Confesse and publiquely acknowledge before almighty God, before all the blessed company of heauen, and before all yee my deare Sisters, who are here present; that I am, and will dye a true obediēt Child of the holy Catholique Church. I beleiue and confesse all, and every part or article of the Christian faith; especially the articles expressed or otherwise contained in the twelue articles of the Christian Faith; as they were deliuered vnto vs in the Euangelicall truth, by the Apostles from the holy Ghost. Briefely I beleiue, whatsoeuer a true Christian ought to beleiue.*

Ire-

I reioice from my whole heart to dye in this immoueable and firme Faith: holding and offering this my Protestation, as a shield against all the treacheries and deceits of the diuell. And if it shall happen (which God forbid) that through the temptation of the diuell, or violence of my sickneſſe; I should thinke, ſpeake, or doe any thing contrary to the foreſaid Protestation: or should fall into any Infidelitie, Diffidence, doubt or deſperation, or whatſoeuer elſe; I doe now recall it, and make it void, in the preſence of all yee my deare Siſters: euen as I would doe then, if I were in my right ſenſes and iudgement: and hereto I call all yee, who are here preſent, and my good Angell, to whoſe cuſtodie I am committed: as witneſſes of this my Proteſtations, before the omnipotent iudge.

I doe alſo pardon and forgiue all iniuries, and wrongs whatſoeuer

haue bene done vnto me, by any one; and doe humbly aske pardon and forgiuenesse of all those whome I haue any way offended, in thought, word, or deed: especially of all yee my deare Sisters.

Moreouer, I aske, and from my whole heart desire, to be partaker of all the good works, which by holy persons, in the whole Church hitherto haue bene done, or euer shalbe done; but especially of the most bitter Passion, and most innocent death of our Lord Iesus Christ.

And I would to God, that I had neuer sinned, or offended my God, his lawes, my Superiours, or yee my deere Sisters, or any any one whomsoeuer.

Lastly I giue thankes to our omnipotent God, for all his benefits he hath bestowed vpon me, & commend my body and soule into his hands. And into the bitter Passion of our

Lord

Lord Ieſus Chriſt; to whom be all praiſe honour, and glory for euer & euer. Amen. Ieſus. Maria.

If they chance to be ſo weake, that they cannot make this Proteſtation: ſome one may propound them by way of queſtiõs: and the ſicke party hath nothing to anſwere; but I, or no, by the grace of God; or to shew their conſent, or diſſent, by ſome ſigne. As for example.

Doe you believe all the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, as the Catholique Church teacheth vs? ℟. *I doe by the grace of God.*

Doe you deteſt all Hereſies, Errors, Superſtitions condemned by the Church? ℟. *I doe deteſt them from the bottome of my heart.*

Doe you rejoice, that you are to die in the Catholique Faith, and in the vnion and obedience of our holy Mother the Church? ℟. *I rejoice in*

my whole ſoule.

Doe you acknowledge that in your life you haue offended God, and not liued ſo wel as you ought? R. I acknowledge it, and am ſorry for it.

Are you ſorry for all the ſinnes, you haue committed againſt God, and for all the good which you haue omitted and neglected? R. I am ſorry with all my heart.

Doe you aske pardon for them? R. I doe in all ſubmiſſiue manner.

Haue you a ſincere purpoſe and will, to change and amend your life, if God ſhould giue you longer life? R. I doe fully purpoſe it.

Doe you alſo aske grace of God, that you may continue this purpoſe, and haue true contrition for your ſinnes? R. I doe humbly aske it.

Doe you pardon from your heart, all thoſe who haue done you wrong, as alſo deſire pardon of all thoſe whom by word or deed you haue offended

fended? ℟. I doe both from my heart.

Doe you believe, and acknowledge Christ Iesus the sonne of God, to haue dyed for you; and that by no other meanes you can be saued, but by the merits of his Passion? ℟. I doe firmely believe it.

Doe you giue thankes with all your heart, for so great a benefit? ℟. I doe in as much as I am able.

After they may suggest vnto the sicke Sister some pious sentences according to their devotion: as

In manus tuas Domine commendo spiritum meum.

Dirupisti Domine vincula mea, tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis, & nomen Domini invocabo.

Largire claram vespere, quo vita nusquam decidat, sed pramium mortis sacræ, perennis instet gloriæ.

Sancta Maria mater Dei, ora pro

nobis peccatoribus, nunc & in hora mortis nostræ. Amen.

Maria mater gratiæ, mater misericordiæ, tu nos ab hoste protege, & hora mortis suscipe.

Aperi mihi pulsanti Domine, ianuam vitæ: Principes tenebrarum non occurrant mihi. Abdias of Babilon saith that these were the last words of S. Iohn the Euangelist.

Some one may say for the sicke Sister (who if she be able may say the same after them) these prayers following.

Be present ô my Lord Iesu Christ; least the thieues doe preuent me, and lay their snares against me: let thy glorie compasse me thy seruant, that cloathed with so great grace, the aduerse powers may not dare to hinder me. Be present ô my Lord; that I may passe with peace and securitie; and that thou maist direct my iour-

ney,

ney, and the diuell attempt nothing againſt me. Let his eies be blinded, and his mouth ſilent, by thy power; that he may find nothing in me, which he may obiect againſt me.

O Soueraigne Deitie, immenſe goodneſſe, moſt clement & moſt glorious Trinitie, ſoueraigne ſweetneſſe, loue and charitie, haue mercy vpon me moſt miſerable ſinner; to thee I commend my ſpirit.

O Lord Ieſu Chriſt, I aske thy Paradiſe, not through my merits; ſith I am but duſt and aſhes, and a moſt miſerable ſinner; but in vertue and efficacy of thy moſt holy Paſſion: whereby thou wouldeſt redeeme me wretch, and haſt vouchſafed to buy Paradiſe for me, by the priſe of thy pretious bloud.

℣. O Lord thou haſt broken my bonds.

℟. I will ſacrifice to thee an hoaſt of Praiſe, and inuocate the

name

O Lord Iesu Christ, for the bitternesse, which thou didst suffer for me, especially in that houre, wherein thy most holy soule did goe forth out of thy body; take pity on my most miserable soule, in its going forth.

The Peace of our Lord Iesus Christ, and the vertue of his most holy Passion, the signe of the holy Crosse; and the integritie of the alwayes most B. Virgin Marie; the Benediction of all the Saincts, the Custody of Angels, and the suffrages of all the elect, be betweene me, and mine enemies, visible and invisible, in this houre of my death. Amen.

O Queene of heauen, Mother of mercy Refuge of sinners, defend me from the enemie, and receiue me at the houre of death, reconcile me to thy only begotten sonne: aske his clemency for me an vnworthy sinner, that for thy sake, he may pardon my

my wickednesse, and bring me to his eternall glorie. Amen.

O yee most B. Spirits of heauen, assist me passing from this world, & powerfully deliuer me from the treachery of my aduersaries, and take my soule into your company. Thou especially, my good Angel, to whose charge I haue bene committed by our Lord, helpe and assist me at this last and dangerous passage.

O most Glorious and B. Father S. Francis, during my life, I haue placed a singular hope and confidence in thee; now helpe me, labouring in this extreame article of necessitie, now I am tormented aboue measure, now the time and houre is at hand, now intend vnto mine aide.

They may vse this prayer, to any other Saincts or Patronesse; whom they haue honoured with deuotion in their life time.

It wilbe very profitable to read the

the Paſſion of our Sauiour, in reading wherof, according to their deuotion, they may either vſe ſome of the ſentences, or apply ſome things to themſelues; or cauſe it to be read againe. They may alſo as the time will permit read one of theſe following Queſtions.

QVEST. IV.

How the Superiours are to perſuade the ſick party, to turne to God?

THe Abbeſſe, and thoſe who are preſent with the ſicke, ought to moue them to pietie & deuotion; and to put their whole truſt in God, who is the end of all their labours and deſires, & therfore now at laſt with their whole heart and affection they ſhould turne to their God. And to this

end

end they may read or cause to be read what followeth.

Deare Sister, although that at all times we ought to convert our selues to God, wholy despicing all other things; yet principally you ought to doe it at this time of your sickness, which you ought to receiue as an Ambassadour from God, with all honour & reuerence expecting the comming of God himselfe: for what is this your infirmitie; but the knocke, which God giueth at the doore of your heart: and what is your sickness? but *Virga aurea* the golden rodde, Esther 4 which God stretcheth forth, for a signe of his clemency, that so you may liue with him eternally. O receiue and embrace it as a token of his loue, & answere him if you can with the like, *Conuert to him*, and as the Prophet Zacharie testifieth,

ſtifieth, *he will Conuert to you.* cap. 1. and come vnto you, in what shape or forme you can deſire; will you haue him to, defend you from your enemies? loe he wilbe a Lord and King vnto you, he wilbe your captaine, your guide, as he hath promiſed by his ſervant Iſaie, cap. 48. *I am the Lord thy God that teacheth thee profitable things; that gouerneth thee in thy way, that thou walkeſt*: Are you ſicke? he wilbe your Phiſition, and as the Pſalmiſt ſaith will heale all your infirmities. Are you poore? he is rich, and liberall, and will moſt plentifully heape his benedictions vpon you, as hetherto in all your life time he hath done. Surely if you conſider all the benefits, he hath beſtowed on mankind, & particularly on you your ſelfe, you cannot but loue ſo ſweet a God, & goe forth with

a willing

a willing minde to meet him, that comes vnto you as a Father; for as the Prophet Isaie saith cap. 63. *he wilbe our Father and our Redeemer*: O goe vnto him with confidence, no way doubting, but he will provide for you an eternall inheritance.

He seekes by all meanes possible to expresse his tender loue, vnto, vs, assuring vs, by the Prophet Isaie cap. 66. that as a tender *Mother he will comfort vs*, truly great is the loue of a mother, but no way to be compared to the loue of our God; and least you should haue some apprehension of him, because you haue offended so louing a Father, he will become your Brother: O doe not refuse so sweet a Brother, but with heart and affection crie out, as the Spouse in the Canticles c. 8. *Who shall giue to me thee my Brother*,

ther, that I may find thee, and kisse and embrace thee? thinke with your selfe, that in this time of sicknesse: he like another Ioseph, doth trie you, to encrease your desire: but he cannot long containe himselfe, expect a little, and he will come vnto you, it is irkesome enough vnto him, that as yet he cannot manifest his goodnesse vnto you.

Perhaps the titles of Father, and elder Brother, may savour of ouer much respect and reuerēce: know therfore he will come neaRer vnto you: and be more familiar with you; for he wilbe your intimate Friend; and such a one as takes most tender compassion of your infirmitie: and is willing to giue his life for you, yea a thousand liues: esteeming no created thing sufficient to manifest his loue vnto you.

Goe therfore Deere ſiſter, with confidence, for neuer, was there a more faithfull Friend, who is as ready to helpe you, as he is able to performe it: whoſe mercie and loue exceeds all his workes; caſt your ſelfe vnder the protection of ſuch a king, who is king of kings, and Lord of Lords, ſo you neede not feare any enemies. Hearken to ſuch a Maſter who ſpeakes nothing but words of life, who cannot deceiue nor be deceiued: haue recourſe to ſo skilfull a Phiſition, to whome no diſeaſe is incurable: goe boldy to ſuch a Father: who is ſo carefull of your good; and who knowes not to doe any thing but good, to his children. Embrace ſo louing a Brother, who is willing to impart all he hath vnto you. Adhere faſt to ſuch a Friend, who night and day, yea every moment ſeekes to

doe

doe good vnto you; and so behaues himselfe, as if he had no other care but only of you; for he is wounded with loue, farre surpassing that of Dauid and Ionathas, who loued one another as their owne soule; in signe whereof Ionathas gaue Dauid his coate. O that it were possible for you to correspond to his loue; but since you cannot: at least take the coate of affliction, tribulation or infirmitie, wherewith he himselfe was cloathed. Yet all this is not sufficient to expresse his loue, he will come nearer, he will not only be, *Alter Ego*: another selfe: but *Idem Ego*; the selfe same; for he *will dispouse you for ever*, Osee 2. *he will dispouse you vnto him in iustice and iudgement, and in mercy, and in commiserations.* O what comfort is it to a devout soule, to thinke, and cõceiue, that he who

is

is the iudge, is their beloued Bridgroome, wholy inflamed with loue. At this time of sickneſſe he comes to renew his eſpouſals with you; that he may conſummate his promiſe; feare not to goe to him, for although he ſeemes to come in iuſtice; yet he cannot be without mercy, which exceeds all his workes. If he cometh to iudge, it is ſtill with the bowells of pitie and commiſeration; can any one poſſibly imagine, that his tender heart will not relent, to ſee his Subiect, Servant, Child, Brother, Siſter, and his intimate Friend to ſuffer any thing without helpe? Can you thinke that he is ſo inſenſible, that he will not feele what is done to his beloued Eſpouſe? belieue it certainly, it is more grieuous & irkeſome vnto him, to giue ſentence againſt her, than to vndergoe his

Paſſion

Passion againe, yea thousand such Passions. In the beginning of his Passion, he did tremble and sweat droppes of bloud, O that the eies of our soule could see, in what plight he is sometimes, fearing that his vngratfull Espouse should neglect his grace, & contēne his loue, which he so prodigaly bestowed vpon her? seeking by all meanes possible to manifest it vnto her; that he might make her his by loue and grace; as she is his by nature. The Prophet Ezechiel doth declare his goodnesse in these termes. cap. 16. *I passed by thee, and saw thee; & behold thy time; the time of louers. And I spred my garment ouer thee, and couered thy ign minie: and I sware to thee, and I entred a couenant with thee: and thou wast made mine.* O God what soule is not melted in consideration of his goodnesse! for

what

what is this to ſay, but that our good God did ſeeme to paſſe by you, in the time of your life; but now in the latter end, he doth ſee you; or in the time of pleaſure & cõtent he hath paſſed by you, but now in the time of your ſickneſſe, tribulation or affliction, he doth looke downe vpon you: and cries out vnto you in effect: behold thy time, to turne with-all your heart to me: I haue hetherto mercifully caſt mine eie on you; and doe you now at this time at leaſt caſt the eie of your heart on me now at this time of louers, at this time, when we are to meete together, that we may enter into the celeſtiall wedding chamber, where the long deſired marriage of your ſoule ſhalbe accomplished, doo not regard thine owne vnworthyneſſe or nakedneſſe, for I haue

ſpred the garment of my merits over thee, and haue couered thy ignominie by my Paſſion; come confidently, put on theſe garmẽts, which I haue prepared for thee: follow my counſell; I haue taken the malediction from thee, only heare my voice, and be aſſured thou ſhalt obtaine the benediction of thy heauenly Father. It is impoſſible for him to deny, what is demanded in my name. Doe but humbly lay hold on my Paſſion, and I (who am truth & veritie it ſelfe) doe ſweare vnto thee, & make a covenant of peace and mercy with thee, to the end, that thou maiſt be made mine. I haue giuen all things to thee, yea mine owne ſelfe, and expect nothing, but that shouldeſt giue thy ſelfe.

O who is able to expreſſe the goodneſſe of our God, and what ſoule

ſoule can cõceiue this great loue; and not returne with loue to him. O who would not moſt willingly embrace any thing, that comes frõ ſo louing a God? who would not take ſickneſſe with ioy, when he conſiders, that it is but a preparation, for the greater feaſt that followes: deuout S. Bernard, compares ſickneſſe to a dinner, bidding vs expect a ſupper in heauen. *For now* (ſaith he) *thou art deſpouſed to Chriſt: now the wedding dinner is celebrated: but the ſupper is prepared in heauen*; thriſe happy thoſe, who prepare themſelues for it, by converting themſelues to God, wherfore beloued Siſter, in a more fervent manner in this your laſt paſſage, convert your ſelfe vnto your beloued Spouſe Chriſt Ieſus, who hath ſo piouſly converted himſelfe to you.

QVEST. V.

How they ought to consider Death?

THe Angelicall Doctor saith, that nothing is so much to be desired, nor nothing more necessarie, than to die well. Our whole life, being but a carriere to death; or as S. Remachus in his deathbed said, *a certaine commentarie of death*; the memory wherof seemes irksome to nature, but most profitable and delightfull to the servant of Christ Iesus: for as S. Augustine saith, *If men would continually thinke of the day of their death, they would bridle their mind from auarice, and malice; and from all euill: yea from all things of this world.* For as *S. Hierome* saith. *He who dayly remembers that he is to dye,*

dye, doth contemne things present, & doth make hast, to those things which are to come. The consideration wherof, as *S. Gregory Naz.* affirmeth; *will make vs triumph over death, when it comes*; to this end *Seneca* did giue this rule. *Omnis dies velut vltimus ordinandus.* We should order euery day, as if it were the last: that so we may be alwayes prepared for the comming of our Sauiour, and not so much thinke of the number of the dayes past, as to consider the neerenesse of the day, wherein we shall find a period of all our miseries; it doth not become a Christian, whose hope is placed in another life; to be vnwilling to loose this. *S. Cyprian* saith that. *He doth not beliene the Resurrection who doth not hasten to better things.* And in another place speaking to Religious Persons he saith. *Most be-*

loued Brethren, we ought to consider, and againe and againe to ruminate, that we haue renounced the world, & that in the meane while we liue here, but as guests and pilgrimes, O let vs embrace the day which assigneth each one his house, which doth restore vs, taken from hence & loosed from this worlds treachery, to Paradise, and the celestiall kingdome: there are a great number of our deare Friends, Parents, Brethren, or Sisters who expect vs: the most frequent and copious troupes of heauen, now secure of their immortalitie, and as yet sollicitous of our sal-vation, doth desire that we should come to their sight, and embracings: There are the glorious quire of Apostles, there the number of exulting Prophets, there the innumerable company of Martyrs crowned for their victorie in the fight and Passion, there the triumphing Virginss, who haue subdued

the

the concupiscence of the flesh & body, with the strength of continency. To these, most beloued, Brethren let vs make hast with greedy desire, let vs wish that we may quickely be with them; and that we may speedily come to Christ. This made *S. Paule* Phil. 1. to desire to be *dissolued and to be with Christ*; so the royall Prophet, lamenteth his delay, saying Psal. 119. *Woe is me that my seiourning is prolonged:* that my seiourning and transitorie aboade, is so long prolonged, and I depriued of so great a good. Psal. 41. *Euen as the hart desireth after the fountaine of waters, so doth my soule desire after thee my God; when shall I come, and appeare before the face of my God?* S. Augustine exclaimeth in the same manner. *When shall I come and appeare before the face of our Lord, to see him in the bounty of his elected, to reioyce in the*

ioy of his people, that he may be praised with his inheritance? O when shall I see that citie, whereof it is said: thy streets ô Ierusalem are paued with cleane gold, in thee shalbe sung a canticle of ioy, and through all thy streets all shall say Allelvia? O holy citye, ô beautifull citie, I salute thee a farre of. I crie to thee, I require thee, for I desire to see thee, and to rest in thee: but retained in flesh I am not sufferred? O desirable citie: thy wals are one stone, thy keeper God himselfe, thy citizens are alwayes ioyfull, and reioice alwayes in the vision of God. It is no wonder, that Gods servants should so much desire the fruition therof; for the sole consideration of it, maketh all things most pleasing, yea death it selfe: and what is death? but a releasment out of a loathsome prison; a separation from a rotten carkasse? subiect to

infinite

infinite miseries and a finall entry towards eternall ioyes? which made Constantine the great to say. Now *death is become more sweet to me than life: now is that most wished day at hand.* We read of one Father *Conradus* a Dominican Friar. Who being in the article of death cried out. *Know, my Brethren, that I die now faithfully, willingly, confidently and ioyfully; faithfully, because I shall die in the faith of my Lord Iesus Christ, and in the Catholicke Church: willingly, because that from that day wherein I put on this habit, I haue endeavoured to keepe my selfe in the grace of God, and with all my force to please him. Confidently, because presently after my death I shall certainely enter into the house of my Lord; lastly ioyfully, for this moment wherein you now see me, is only a passage from labours to eternall rest.*

I will conclude this point with the example of our holy Father, who a few dayes before his death; asked of the Phisitiõ, what he thought of his sickneſſe? who anſwering that by the mercy of God he should doe well; our holy Father with a ioyfull and vndanted mind, ſaid. *Tell me truely what you thinke of me: doe not feare, for by the grace of God, I am not faint-hearted, that I should feare death: for the grace of the holy Ghoſt cooperating with me, I doe ſo faſt adhere to my Lord, that I ſhall neither be ſad for death, nor more reioice for a longer life; It wilbe equall ioy to me in death and in life*; If we be true Children of the ſame Father, we muſt truely be reſigned to God, either to liue or die, and remember the ſaying of Climacus *He is proued who expects death every day: but he is holy who deſires death euery houre.*

QVEST.

QVEST. VI.

How they are to propound the distriction of Gods Iustice?

GReat S. Gregorie giueth this counsell, to all: saying. *Most deare Brethren, thinke of that day, (to wit of iudgement) with your whole intention, correct your life, change your manners, ouercome the tempting euills by resisting, and punish euills committed by teares, for by so much the more securely, yee shall then see the comming of the eternall Iudge, by how much more yee preuent the distriction therof by feare*; Not by a seruile base feare, but by a filiall feare, a louing feare, preventing the iudgement of God, according to the words of S. Paule 1. Cor. 11. *If we iudge our selues, we shall not be iudged*: or as

S. Auguſtine ſaith *The diuine reuenge ceaſeth, if humaine conuerſion doe goe before: for God loueth to ſpare thoſe who confeſſe their ſinnes; and not to iudge thoſe, who doe iudge themſelues.*

True it is, that it is an infallible decree, and irrevocable arreſt of the ſupreame Iudge, that all men muſt paſſe this iudgement: but if we conſider the qualitie of the iudge, how propitious, clement, and mercifull he is; and how ready he is to paſſe the ſentence in the favour of his clients; we ſhould not be any way diſmayed, to come vnto him: ô how willingly doth he pronounce thoſe comfortable words. *Come yee Bleſſed of my Father, poſſeſſe the kingdome prepared for yee, from the foundation of the world.* Come from darkeneſſe, to light: from ſlaverie, to the libertie of the ſonnes

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of God; from labour, to eternall reſt; from warre, to peace; from death, to life; from the ſocietie of the wicked world, to the company of Angels: from agony, to triumph: come from the miſerie of this world, and poſſeſſe my kingdome that I haue prepared for you: on the other ſide, it cannot be expreſſed, how vnwillingly, & as it were by force, he paſſeth the ſentence againſt thoſe, who vngratfully haue neglected his grace, favour, & loue: the cruell Iewes did not vſe ſo much violence againſt him, as they haue done to extort this ſentence from him, night & day, he would haue shewed his mercy vnto them, but all in vaine. Speake ô ſoule: what is there that he could doe to ſaue thee, and he hath not done it: If it had bene neceſſary, to haue dyed againe, he would haue done

it:

it: if thou didſt want grace, loe he hath given thee his Sacraments, which are as fountaines of grace, and goodneſſe, with infinite other ſpirituall treaſures: how often hath he interiourly called thee? how often hath he given thee occaſions of amendemēt of thy life & how often haſt thou heard, that at what time ſoeuer a ſinner ſhould repēt him of his ſinne, he would blot out all his ſinnes? he expected no more of thee, but only that thou ſhouldeſt aske pardon, and wilt thou neglect this? ô great ingratitude! ô ſenceleſſe madneſſe! that thus forceth him againſt his mercifull nature. He expoſeth his mercy vnto all, at a low rate, he is contented with an humble pious deſire, and contrite heart.

Take courage therfore, my deare Siſter, ſithence you haue done

done what you can to reconcile your selfe to your God; and now confidently relie on his mercy, & whilst you are here, hide your selfe in the wounds of Christ Iesus; and put your selfe vnder the Patronage of our B. Lady; that she may assist you, at least in this your last passage: imitate the holy theefe, and from your heart say Luc. 23. *Lord remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdome.* say with a liuely faith, and confidence, Lord remember me when thou shalt come to iudge me in thy kingdome; perhaps you may deserue to heare, that most comfortable voice; *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.* I will conclude this point with the prayer of B. S. *Laurence* Patriarke of Venice vsed in his last agony.

Thou knowest ô Lord, I haue had this Day alwayes before my eies, and

although

although when I consider my life, it is rather a confusion, vnto me than life: yet in the spirit of humilitie, receiue me my good Iesus, the life, and saluation of my soule: for I doe not cast forth my prayers before thy face, in my iustifications; but in the multitude of thy mercies: I who am the lost sheepe doe returne vnto thee my Pastour; I know thy voice, not that of strangers. O Lord, I aske that thou wouldest bring me backe to thy fold; canst thou dispice the voice of him that cries and flies to thee? art not thou he, who said: hee shall crie vnto me, and I will heare him, I am with him in tribulation, behold O Lord, I cry more with heart than voice: behold tribulation is at hand, and there is not one to deliuer me, but thou my good Iesu, neither dare I to seeke the seat of the B. Spirits, yet the little portion of thy creature, doth aske the crummes of thy most sweet

table.

table. *It would be very much for me, and alas exceeding much, if thou wouldest not deny some little place, to thy abiect servant, under the feet of thy lowest elect.*

QVEST. VII.

How they are to propound the Mercy of God?

IF we should revolue the Scriptures, and peruse all passed ages, we shall alwayes find the footsteps of this divine Attribute, which in regard of its effects, continually appearing to the eie, may be wel said to exceed all other attributes; whence the Psalmist said Psal 144. *Our Lord is pittifull and mercifull: patient & very mercifull: our Lord is sweet to all: and his commiserations are ouer all his workes.* Which may be vnderstood

derstood two wayes; to wit, that his mercy is in all his workes, none being done without mercy; or that the effects of his mercy exceed all other his workes. Our B. Lady assures vs, Luc. 1. that his mercy extendeth it selfe, *from generation to generation.* and King *Dauid* will adde Psal. 32. *The earth is full of the mercy of our Lord.* It hath no limit, of place, worke, or Person; but extendeth it selfe to all, euen at all times; whence the royall Prophet, invites all to praise our Lord in his mercy, saying. *Confesse ye to our Lord, because he is good, because his mercy is for euer.* Which he repeats in every verse of the Psalme, as never being wearied in the praise of that which exceedeth all praises. Old *Zacharias* could not giue greater motiue of his praising God, than because; *he had visi-*

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ted vs in the bowells of his mercy. S. Paule cannot better describe almightie God, than by saying 2. Cor. 1. that *he is the Father of mercies and God of all comfort*; which made S. *Bernard* to crie out. *O how rich art thou in mercy? how magnificent in thy Iustice: how munificent in thy grace! O Lord our God! there is not any one like thee, most plentifull giuer, most iust rewarder, most prous deliuerer, thou dost gratis behold the humble, iustly iudge the innocent, & mercifully saue sinners.* And in another place assuming the prayer of the Church, *Deus cui proprium est misereri. O God to whom it is proper to take pitie.* He doth adde *God doth take matter of commiseration and pitie from himselfe, but we doe force him to condemne vs against his will, against his nature: for he is all mercy and goodnesse* S. Augustine considering the greatnesse

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of Gods mercy ſaith *O Lord: all Whatſoeuer I am, is of thy mercy; for What haue I done that I ſhould be? What haue I acted: that I ſhould be, to inuocate thee? becauſe none is more bountifull in mercy, than thee: from Whom I haue receiued that I ſhould be good; my God and my Mercy.*

O good God who is not aſtonished, to ſee the great mercy of our God? who is more ready to pardon vs, and to shew his mercy, than we are to aske it; Thaulerus by a ſimilitude doth declare the promptitude of Gods mercy ſaying. *Tow or flax put into a great fire, cannot be ſo ſoone kindled, as God is prepared to pardon all ſinnes, to the ſinner who is truly ſorrow for them.* Neither can we pretend we haue bene great ſinners, and haue many times offēded, foras S. Bernard ſaith, *Our Lord doth not regard ſo much What thou haſt bene,*

as What

as what thou wouldeſts be in the deſire of thy heart: And S. Chriſoſtome explicating the mercy of God, doth animate all ſinners to put their truſt in him, by examples ſaying. *Art thou impious or wicked? ſet before thy eies the ſages; art thou an vſurper? thinke vpon the Publican. Art thou impure? Call to mind the harlot* (to wit Marie Magdalene) *Art thou a robber on the high way? let the thiefe* (on the Croſſe) *come before thy eies. Art thou guiltie of hainous crimes? let Paule come into thy mind, who firſt was a blaſphemer, afterward an Apoſtle, firſt a Perſecutor, after an Euangeliſt: firſt a wolfe after a Paſtour: haſt thou ſinned? repent. Haſt thou ſinned a thouſand times? repent a thouſand times?* Let no offences how great, or how many ſoeuer, deterre you; for as long as you haue life, Gods mercy

cy attends on you: for he kee-peth his mercy, vnto thouſands, but punisheth only vnto the third & fourth generation: therby giving vs to vnderſtand, that his mercy exceeds his iuſtice, as much as a thouſand exceeds foure. Loe how little reaſon any one hath to doubt of his goodneſſe; let devout S. Anſelme conclude this poiut. *What can be conceiued to be more mercifull, than that God the Father should ſay, to a ſinner ordained to eternall paines; and not having where withall to redeeme himſelfe? Take my only begotten ſonne, and giue for thee. And God the ſonne to ſay? take me & redeeme thy ſelfe. O ſay Deare Siſter I will take thee ô my Sauiour, and offer my ſelfe to thy Father our Father of mercies, in the vnion of thy moſt ſacred Paſſion.*

I will here adde ſome certaine rules, for the overcomming of

tempta-

temptations, which vſually occurre, but eſpecially in time of ſickneſſe. They may make choiſe of one, or moe, as time and occaſion ſerues.

Remedies againſt temptations which ordinarily occurre in ſickneſſe.

For thoſe who are vnwilling to die.

MAny aſwel in health as in ſickneſſe, are taken with *Bonum eſt hic nos eſſe*: it is good for vs to be here: & are vnwilling to depart this life. But S. Bernard will anſwere. *How is it good for vs to be here? nay it is troubleſome, it is grieuous. it is dangerous to be here where there is much malice, little wiſdome, if that little may be found. Where all things are ſlipperie and lubrick;*

 A declaration of the third
brick; couered with darknesse, beset
with snares of sinnes. What is this
whole life but as S. Iames saith
cap. 4. *a vapour.* Appearing for a
little while, and afterward it
shall vanish away. Whence S.
Gregorie teacheth that this *Tem-*
poral life is labourſome, lighter than
a fable, ſwifter than a courſer, flow-
ing with inſtabilitie, changing by
imbecilitie, wherein is no fortitude,
no conſtant purpoſes, no reſt from
troubles, no auoiding of labours, laſt-
ly who is there, that is not tormented
with dolour? is not vrged with ſol-
licitude, is not ouer whelmed with
feare. Laughter followeth weeping,
and ſadneſſe accompanieth ioy, ſatu-
ritie ſucceedeth hunger, and againe
hunger excludeth ſaturitie or ful-
neſſe. In the night the day is wished
for, & in the day the night is ſought.
In the cold weather, heat; and in
the heart, ſome refreshment: before
meat

meat ſighs, after meat tribulation. If we truly conſider all things, that are in this life, nothing would be more tedious to vs: eſpecially if we ſet before our eies, that the longer our life is, the more we are loaded with ſinne: which made S. Ambroſe to ſay. *Why doe we ſo much deſire this life? wherein by how much the longer one is, by ſo much the more he is loaded with the burthen of his ſinnes?* wherfore we ought to ſay with the Prophet Dauid, Pſal. 141. *Bring forth my ſoule out of priſon, deliuer it from the priſon of this world*, or with the Prophet Ionas: cap. 4. *Now Lord take I beſeech thee my ſoule from me: becauſe better is death to me than life.* Or with Lucius deſire to die, that dying we may ſay. *I am now deliuered from many euill Lords, and I paſſe to God my moſt excellent Father.* They may adde to

this what hath bene ſaid here before, on the conſideration of death.

Againſt hope of longer life.

OThers are taken with a ſtrong conceit of *Infirmitas hæc non eſt ad mortem.* This temptation hath ſuch an apparent shew of good; that many times their Ghoſtly Fathers doe lulle them vp with the conceit of longer life: the Phiſition, puts them in hope therof, every one that comes to the ſicke partie, bids them be of good comfort, they may amend: this ſickneſſe will eaſily paſſe. which made our holy Father to leaue this charge to the Superiours, that they should put them in mind of death, as hath bene ſaid before, wherto we may adde what followeth.

At

At all times it behoueth vs to remember, that we are mortall: and that ſometime we muſt die; the pitcher that goeth often to the water, at laſt is broken; you haue bene often ſicke, ſome ſickneſſe wilbe the laſt; it can hurt you nothing to prepare your ſelfe for death, it is very dangerous to deferre the time, for as S. Hierome ſaith. *Nothing doth ſo much deceiue mankind, as that whilſt they know not the ſpace of their life, they promiſe to themſelues a longer poſſeſſion of this world.* It were better to follow the Counſell of our Saviour. Mat. 24. *Watch, becauſe you know not what houre your Lord will come.* Conformably to this S. Hierome. ſaith. *Euery Chriſtian ought to watch leaſt the comming of our Lord find him vnprepared, & therfore ſo liue as if thou wert to die to day: ſo labour as if thou were*

to liue euer. And for this end if we may belieue, S. Chriſoſtome, God hath left the day of our death vncertaine, for if men did know when they should die, even at that houre, they would endeavour to repent: and would vſe their diligence only at that time: and S. Auguſtine hath the ſame; *The laſt day is vnknowne vnto vs, that we may obſerue every day:* Eſpecially this day of ſickneſſe, which renewes in your memorie the certaine truth of your being mortall; you may die, and who can aſſure you that you shall not, even at this time; *God* ſaith Saint Auguſtine, *hath promiſed thee, that at what time ſoeuer thou shalt be conuerted to him, he will forget all thy euills paſſed; but he hath neuer promiſed thee life for to morrow:* wherfore even now prepare your ſelfe to die, for in ſo doing you

avoid

avoid the danger that you may fall vnto, and shall not die one houre, or moment the ſooner, nay many times, you may liue longer for it. As is to be ſeene in Ezechias.

Againſt Impatience.

SOmetimes in this laſt ſickneſſe, the divell knowing Apoc. 12. that he hath but a little time, doth make his aſſaults, ſeeking how he may get poſſeſſion of our hearts, by provoking vs to impatience, that ſo he may make a breach to enter in farther, and ſuggeſting vnto vs, that God hath forſaken vs, and left vs for a punishment of our ſinnes.

But let vs anſwere him Our Lord is good highly to be praiſed, and moſt worthy to be loved. But I am an evill ſervant, exceeding

ding culpable, and worthy to be beaten with his ſcourge; he is altogether clement, and much mercyfull, but I am negligent, and worthy of all euill: from ſo good a Lord, no evill can come; and my ſickneſſe or tribulation is, but a preparatiue for my greater good. It ſeemeth to be a bitter potion, but it will cleanſe and purge my ſoule; and reduce it to its maker. Let my God here burne, lanche, cut, teare, and afflict me, or ought elſe he pleaſe; for it comes from a wiſe Phiſition, that intends to heale me: according to nature I finde difficultie in it, but as the Apoſtle ſaith Phil. 4. *I can doe all things in him that ſtrengtheneth me*; and I am ſure 1. Cor. 10. *God is faithfull, who will not ſuffer me to be tempted aboue that which I am able. But will make alſo with tentation iſſue, that I may be able to ſu-*

ſtaine.

ſtaine. I know and firmely beleue that as the wiſe man ſaith Pro. 3. *Whom our Lord loueth he chaſticeth*, and as a louing Father, is pleaſed to ſend this ſickneſſe, this paine, or tribulatiõ, for my good: whence Tertullian teacheth, that ſickneſſe doth *Recollect the wandering mind, and binds it to God.* And S. Ambroſe. *God vſeth ſickneſſe or diſeaſes as his ſergants, who may withdraw me from pleaſures, and recall me from the meridian ſunne, and ſhut me vp in moſt hidden retraites, and hands and feet being bound, doth tie me to my bedde vntill I become more wiſe.* I conſider when ſickneſſe knockes at the doore of my heart, the beatitude is not farre of, & therfore with S. Iames c. 1. *I will eſteeme it ioy when I ſhall fall into diuers tentations, knowing that the probation of my faith, worketh patience*: becauſe Eccl. 2. *God is*

 A declaration of the third
pittifull and mercyfull, and will for-
giue ſinnes in the day of tribulation.
And Pro. 17. *ſilver is tryed by the*
fire and gold in the furnace: our
Lord proveth our hearts, by ſick-
neſſe and infirmitie, and makes
the world bitter vnto me, euen as
a louing mother who being to
weane her child, puts worme-
wood vpon her breaſts, that the
child may loath to ſucke: he
makes the things of this world
bitter vnto me, that I might ſeeke
that which is celeſtiall; wel ſaid
the Patriarke Iob cap. 5. *Bleſſed*
is the man that is corrected of God,
wherfore I will not refuſe the
chaſticing of our Lord, becauſe
he woundeth, & cureth, ſtriketh,
and his hands ſhall heale: In him
is all my truſt. His holy will be
done in me. I haue receiued good
things, why ſhould not I receiue
euill, if it be his holy will, prai-

ſed

sed be his holy name in all things.

Against vaine Glorie.

AT other times the enemie moues them with vaine glorie, of their Patience, of their good workes, of their good life, and such like. But they may answere with the Psalmist. *My soule be thou subiect to God, because my patience is from him*: what haue I that I haue not from him? I acknowledge Iac. 1. *That every best guift and every perfect guift is from the Father of lights*: whence S. Paule saith Gal. 6. *If any man esteeme himselfe to be something, whereas he is nothing he seduceth himselfe*: for we are not 2. Cor. 3. *sufficient to thinke any thing of our selues as of our selues, but our sufficiency is of God*: and Phil. 2. *It is God that worketh in vs, both to will,*

 A declaration of the third
and to accomplish: whence S. Auguſtine ſaith *If I haue any thing, I haue taken it from God, not preſumed it of my ſelfe, for if I am any thing, that is praiſe worthy, I am it by his guift: not by my witt or merit.* Briefly, let vs remember the words of our Sauiour. Luc. 17. *When you ſhall haue done all things that are commanded you: ſay We are vnprofitable ſeruants.*

Againſt Blaſphemie.

ON the contrary, many times the diuell preſents ſome occaſion, either of the vehemency of ſickneſſe, or ingratitude, or neglect of Freinds: or ſuch like, to make them Blaſpheme God, &c.

But they may reply with a liuely courage, *Whatſoeuer my good God ſhall pleaſe to doe with me, I am his handworke and I will al-*

ways

wayes acknowledge, that he is good and perfect in all his workes, wherfore depart thou most euill seducer, goe vncleane spirit, be ashamed vile wretch, thou art very vncleane, thou shall not haue any part in me, but there shalbe with me a strong warrier, and thou shalt stand confounded. Thus Thom. a Kempis. l. 3. c. 6. and Climacus sets downe a particular meanes to overcome this temptation. Grad 23. *He who doth feele himselfe, to be troubled with the spirit of blasphemie, and doth desire to be freed, or deliuered from it; let him know certainely, that his soule is not the cause of this cogitations, but that impure spirit who sometimes said to our Lord, I will giue thee all these, if falling downe thou wilt worship me: and therfore we also contemning him, and nothing esteeming what things are said by him: let vs securely and vndan-*

tedly say; Goe after me Sathan, let thy speech and deceit be turned on thy head, and let thy blasphemie descend on thy toppe of thy head both in this present World, and in the World to come. He who will fight any other way against the spirit of blasphemie, is like vnto him, that endevoureth to containe lightning in his hands.

In which words we may gather, that we ought not to be troubled for blasphemous thoughts, as long as we haue a will to the contrary: and that the best way to over come them is to contemne them, and not to esteeme of them, and this not only in time of sicknesse, but also at all times.

Against Infidelitie.

WHen he cannot prevaile with this way, he will suggest many thoughts of Infidelitie,

delitie, concerning the moſt abſtruſe points of our faith, &c.

But to this, it is a preſent remedie to make ſome act of faith, to belieue what the Catholicque Church teacheth, acknowledging that the ſubiect of our faith, doth farre tranſcend our humaine weake reaſon. Witneſſe S. Greg. *The diuine operation is not admirable, if it may be comprehended by reaſon; and faith hath not merit, where humaine reaſon may giue experience.* & S. Ambroſe *The ſimplicitie of our faith excells all arguments.* And Saint Chriſoſtome deſcribes Faith, to be *an innocent and pure credulitie, which excludeth doubts, holdeth things certaine, & aſſigneth things promiſed.* S. Auguſtine will tell vs a remedie which he himſelfe vſed. *In ſo many dangers* (to wit of infidelitie) *nothing elſe remained, but that I ſhould pray with*

weeping,

 A declaration of the third
weeping, and lamentable voice, the
diuine prouidence, to giue me helpe.
And I did doe this diligently; ther-
fore I did crie out with the Apostle,
Lord encrease my faith; and with the
mother of the lunaticke boy, to whom
our Lord had said, if thou canst be-
lieue, all things are possible to him
that believeth: she answered, crying
with teares; I believe Lord: helpe my
incredulitie or with Dionise the
cathusiā we may say. *I most firmely*
believe what all the Apostles haue be-
lieued, what innumerable Martyrs,
Confessours, and Virgins haue be-
lieued: whose faith and doctrine,
God (who cannot deceiue, nor be
deceiued) hath confirmed with
innumerable miracles. Of whose ho-
ly life none can iustly doubt: who all
haue pleased God by this faith: whom
also our true and faithfull God hath
illustrated aliue and dead with stu-
pendious miracles.

Against

Against Desperation.

LAstly to omit many other tryings which might be said in this kind, the enemie will set vpon them, and lay open before their eies the greatnesse of their sinnes; that so he may draw them to Desperation. But they shall easily overcome this, by the consideration of Gods goodnesse and Mercy, wherof we haue spoken before: in this place we may adde, that of the wiseman, who admiring the mercy of God cryeth out: Eccl. 17. *O how great is the mercy of our Lord, and his propitiation to them that turne vnto him.* Is not his mercy great? when by the mouth of the Prophet Isaie cap. 1. he affirmeth that: *If your sinnes shalbe as scarlet, they shalbe made white as snow*, and by Ezechiel

chiel giueth the reaſon, cap. 18. *Becauſe I will not the death of him that dyeth, returne yee & liue.* Neither can the multitude of our ſinnes, deterre vs, for as S. Baſill ſaith. *Although thy ſinnes can be defined both in greatneſſe, & nomber. Yet the mercy of God, can neuer be circumſcribed either in greatneſſe, or nomber.* Wherfore without *Doubt there is no reaſon that any one ſhould deſpaire, but acknowledge the mercy of God, and deteſt their ſinnes committed.* And S. Auguſtine *O man who doeſt regard the multitude of thy ſinnes: Wherfore doſt thou not regard the omnipotencie of the celeſtiall Phiſition? for ſithence God will ſhew mercy, becauſe he is good: and can, becauſe he is omnipotent: he doth ſhut the gate of the diuine goodneſſe againſt himſelfe: who beliueth that God neither will, nor can ſhew mercy vnto him, or is diffident whe-*

ther

ther he be good or omnipotent. Let vs adde S. Bernard, who affirmeth that. *The Pietie of God is greater than any iniquitie: for only desperation it a crime which cannot be healed*: And although the lateneſſe of the time of repentance may be dangerous: yet ſuch is the goodneſſe of God that he will not refuſe them, who come vnto him, euen in the laſt gaſpe witneſſe the Prophet Ezechiel cap. 33. *The impietie of the impious shall not hurt him, in what day ſoever he shall convert from his iniquitie.* And S. Leo, *We can neither put meaſure to the mercy of God, nor limit it to time, for before him, true Converſion ſuffers no delayes of Pardon; the holy Ghoſt ſaying by the Prophet, When converted thou shalt mourne, thou shalt be ſaued. And againe, Becauſe with our Lord there is mercy: and with him plenteous redemption.*

S. Augu-

S. Auguſtine hath the ſame. *God doth neuer deſpice penance: if it be ſincerely and ſimply offered, he taketh it, willingly receiueth it, embraceth all things that he may reduce man to his former ſtate; whilſt we are in this life, how great ſinnes ſoeuer happen vnto vs, it is poſſible to waſh them all away, by penance.* And S. Iſodore *No man ought to deſpaire of pardon, although he be conuerted to penance about the end of his life. For God iudgeth euery one of his end, not of his paſt life.* Let vs end this, with the words of S. Cyprian. *Euen in the article of our time, when now the ſoule doth haſten to its going forth, and is euen at the lippes of him, that is gaſping, the benignitie of our moſt clement God, doth not deſpice repentance, neither is that late which is true, nor that ſinne irremiſſible whoſe repentance is voluntarie: and whatſoeuer neceſſitie forceth to repentance*

ſame, neither the quantitie of the crime, nor the brevitie of the time nor extremitie of the houre, nor enormitie of the life excludes from pardon, if there be true Contrition, if there be a pure change of the Will: but our mother charitie doth take the prodigall child returning in the amplitude of her boſome.

Wherfore when the enemie ſhall ſuggeſt this deſperation vnto vs, let vs remember the words of S. *Maximus Although my ſinnes be great; yet there is one thing remaines, to wit hope in God: for it cannot be, that any one ſhall fall from his propounded end, who with his whole minde hath hope in God:* or ſay with S. Bernard. *I haue ſinned a great ſinne my conſcience is troubled; but it ſhall not be troubled, becauſe I call to mind the wounds of our Lord: For he was wounded for our iniquities. What is ſo much to death, that is not*

healed

healed by the death of Christ? if therfore so powerfull and so efficacious a medicine commeth to my mind, I cannot be terrefied with any malignitie of the disease. And therfore it is manifest that he erred, who said, my iniquitie is greater than that I may deserue pardon.

The same Doctor will giue vs another remedie, not much lesse efficacious saying. If the windes of temptation doe arise; if thou shouldest runne vpon the rockes of tribulation: behold the starre call vpon Marie. In dangers in anxieties, in necessities, thinke vpon Marie, inuocate Marie: let her not depart from thy mouth, let her not goe from thy heart, and that thou maiest obtaine the suffrage of her prayer: doe not forsake the example of her conuersation: following her thou canst not goe astray, asking her thou canst not despaire, thinking of her thou canst

ſanſt not erre.

Many other things might be here ſaid to this purpoſe, but I feare I haue bene too prolix, and therfore I will paſſe forward to the next chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Viſits which are to be made in the Monaſteries.

THe Provinciall Miniſter of the Frier Minours, or the Viſitour of the ſame Order, to whom this charge ſhalbe committed, ſhall once only every yeare, viſit everie Monaſterie, in preſence

preſence of the ancienteſts of the houſe, and the viſit being done, he ought not to enter into the place of their offices, nor any interiour place of the Siſters. The Viſitour himſelfe ſhall never remaine alone, ſeparated with any Siſter. And the Miniſters and Mothers, ſhall tell the Viſitours, the faults which deſerue Correction. In like manner all the Brothers and Siſters. And if by iudgemeut of the Diſcreets of the Convent, any one ſhalbe found incorrigible, let them be caſt out of the congregation as infected ſheepe.

EXPOSI-

EXPOSITION.

IN this Chapter are contained many things, concerning the Visits, and first that the Superiours either by themselues, or by others shall visit each Monasterie once every yeare.

2. That when they visit the house, they are to haue some of the most ancient Sisters, to be present alwayes with them, with a prohibition that they never remaine alone, with any one Sister, in any private place.

3. That after the Visit is done, they cannot come into the Monasterie any more, especially if it be an enclosed Monasterie.

4. The Superiour or Abbesse, and all the Sisters, are commanded to declare the defects and faults, that may any way deserue correction or amendement, which is the principall end of Visits.

5. Order

5. Order is taken for the incorrigible, that they may be cast forth out of the Order, least they infect the rest.

Wherfore for the better declaration of this Chapter, we may propound 5. Questions 1. What visits are? 2. Who are to visit? 3. What things are to be observed in Visits? 5. To what end, correction is used in Religion. Lastly what is to be done with the incorrigible.

QVEST. I.

What Visits are?

PRelats and Religious Superiours, are wont to visit their flocke, and care committed to their charge, for the confirmation and better establishment of religious discipline, and governmẽt, aswell in the immediate Superiours, as in the subiects; after the example

example of S. Paule Act. 15. who saith: *Let vs returne, and visite our Brethren in all cities, wherein we haue preached the word of our Lord, how they doe.* And that with good reason; for it belongs to the Pastours Act. 20. to take *heede of their whole flocke.* and Heb. 13. *To watch over them as being to render account for their soules.* To this end the wiseman saith Pro. 27. *Know diligently the countenance of thy cattell, and consider thy flockes for thou shalt not haue power alwayes: but a crowne shalbe given into generation and generation.* Which Venerable Bede explicates thus. *Take diligent care of those ouer whom thou art placed, know the mind and actions of each one, and if thou dost finde in them, any corrupting vice, be mindfull quickely to punish it: for thou shalt not haue alwayes power to feed our Lords sheepe, but it is an eter-*

nall crowne which thou shalt reape if thou dost well minister in due time that degree which is committed to thee. Whence the holy Councell of Trent Sess. 25. ordained, that all Superiours should yearly visit the Monasteries that are subiect vnto them: and such is, and ever hath bene, the custome of all Religious Orders, and although that many times there is no great matter to be done, no faults to be corrected (immediate Superiours discharging their duties with such care, and charitie, that all things are kept in good order; and ordinary faults are corrected) yet Visits are necessary: not so much to correct those things, which are contrarie to Religion, as to conserue, strengthen, and confirme the good obseruance of regular discipline; and if neede be to reforme it, & bring it to better

per-

perfection: beſides many are the effects of Viſits, as is to be ſeene in diverſe Authors. I will here ſet downe ſome few, as ſufficient to my purpoſe.

Firſt the Superiours are hereby made more diligent, and carefull in their Offices, when they know they muſt giue account of them 2. The ſubiects doe become more obedient, and plyable to their immediate Superiours. 3. Religious obſeruance, and regular diſcipline, is the more encreaſed. 4. Care is had for the correction of what faults occurre, or of what abuſes haue crept into the Communities. 5. If the immediate Superiours should be negligent to provide for their ſubiects neceſſarie things, by this meanes they may be provided. Laſtly viſits are nothing alſo but a diligẽt inquiry of the conditions, and behaviour,

aſweil of Superiours, as ſubiects: to the end that if any thing be amiſſe, due correction and amendement may be applied. Or a vigilant ſearth, whereby the Paſtour may know what is to be done with his whole flocke, and with each one of his sheepe: what is profitable for them, what is hurtful, what is wanting, and what is ſuperfluous.

QVEST. II.

Who are to Viſite the Monaſteries?

IN the Rule mention is made of Provincialls and Viſitours: and that they shoule be of the Order of the Friar Minours. Of this laſt (beſides the expreſſe text of the Rule which intimates the totall ſubiection of this Order to the Friar Minours, it being a peculiar

culiar function of a Superiour to make Visits, it consequently followes that only the Superiours of the Frier Minours are theire lawfull & ordinarie Superiours:) we haue sufficiently spoken in the first Part of this Booke.

And now the generall Custome is, that those who Visit the Friar Minours, doe also visite the Religious of this Order, which is done once a yeare, by the Provinciall Minister, vnder whose Province they are: or by his commissarie Visitour. And once every three yeare, by higher Superiours, or their Commissarie Visitours; according to the Counsell of Trent. sess. 25. which ordaines as followeth. *Because the holy Synode is not ignorant how much splendour and vtilitie doth arise in the Church of God from Monasteries well instructed and rightly admini-*

 A declaration of the third
stred, and that the ancient and regu-
lar discipline where it is fallen may
be more easily and more maturely re-
stored; and where it is conserved it
may more constantly persever. It
hath iudged it necessarie to command,
as by this decree it commandeth, that
all Regulars, as well men, as women,
doe order and dispose their life ac-
cording to the prescript of the Rule,
which they haue professed; and espe-
cially, that they faithfully obserue
those things, which belong to the per-
fection of their Profession; as of Obe-
dience, Pouertie, and Chastitie, and
of peculiar Vowes and precepts of any
Rule, or Order respectiuely, if there
be any belonging to their essence; as
also for to conserue the common life,
victualls, and apparell. And all Su-
periours shall adhibite all care and di-
ligence therto: as well in their Gene-
rall and Prouinciall Chapters, as al-
so in their Visits, which in their due

times

times they shall not omit to doe.

The wiſeman explicates their office in a few words. Eccl. 7. *Haſt thou cattell? Looke well to them; and if they be profitable, let them continue with thee. Haſt thou children? inſtruct them, and bow them from their child-hood.* That is: If thou haſt ſubiects who are rude and dull, take compaſſion of their frailty: and ceaſe not to teach & inſtruct them, in their duty and Profeſſion. If they be ſenſuall or giuen to the fleſh, labour to make them liue conformably to the reſt; if they be addicted to idleneſſe, endeavour by word and example to raiſe their minds, and ſpend their time to the profit of their ſoules, and good of the Monaſterie. But if they be children, that is if they giue their minds purely to ſeeke God, and obſerue their Profeſſion; inſtruct them in

all ſweetneſſe, & induce them by the way of humilitie, to imitate the example of our Saviour.

QVEST. III.

What things are to be obſerved in making of Viſits?

IT is hard to ſet downe any certaine rule herein, becauſe each one will follow the cuſtome which he hath obſerved, & beſt likes: yet the ordinary vſe is, firſt to read their Obedience, and declare the authoritie that he hath from higher Superiours (if he be a commiſſarie Viſitour) and what intention he comes for. If it be the Superiour himſelfe he only declares his intention, and admoniſheth them what they are to doe.

2. If they can conveniently, either

ther they who visit, or some other at their appointment, doth sing Masse of the holy Ghost, to invocate Gods grace and assistance in this worke; wherat all the Sisters are to be present, if it may be, for the same intention.

3. The locall Superiour is to present all the names of the Sisters; with their particular Offices; that so the Visitour may the better know them, and all things being provided in convenient place, the Superiour begins his Visit.

4. The Sisters one after another in their Order, shall come to the Visitour; and there freely, without any reservation, and simply declare what in their conscience they thinke is fitting to be corrected, and amended in the Monastery.

5. After this the Visitour ac-

companied with one or two Fathers, is to enter into the Monaſterie, to ſee the Dorter, celles, and other places of the Monaſterie, marking whether all things be in good Order, as Regular diſcipline doth require, and particularly concerning encloſure: as whether the wals, windous and doore be ſuch, as befits religious encloſure. The Abbeſſe and ſome other ſhall alwayes accompany him, that viſits; and two other or more of the elder Siſters, according to the number of the Fathers, which come in, ſhall accompany them: ſo that in the time of the viſit none of them ſhall remaine alone with any of the Fathers nor ſpeake alone to them, vnleſſe it be to the Viſitour.

Laſtly the Viſitour going to the Chapter houſe, or other place fitting

fitting, as he shall appoint, all the Sisters shall come in besides such as shalbe thought convenient to stay with the other Fathers, and there with humilitie giue eare to what shalbe ordayned, or said by the Visitour. Which done according to the vsuall custome, the Visitour giueth the Generall Absolution, & his benediction. And so departs. After which time, to wit after he hath cõpleatly made his Visit: he cannot come into the Monasterie more, vnlesse it be in cases of necessitie, wherof we will speake in the last Chapter.

QVEST. IV.

What is the subiect of Visits?

FOr the Instruction of those, who perhaps may be ignorant

rant of what they are to doe in Visits; I haue thought good, to set downe generall heads, wherby they may iudge of the rest; aboue all things they ought to propound nothing but with Religious zeale, and vpright intention and charitie; for the honour of God, and good of Religion.

1. Let them declare whether any thing be permitted in the cõmunitie, that is contrary to the law of God.

2. Whether any thing be done, against the vowes of Obedience, Povertie and Chastitie.

3. Whether the Sisters doe shew any want of loue, reverence, respect, or Obedience to their Superiours.

4. Whether any one doth cõmit acts of proprietie.

5. Whether any be defectiue in the obseruance of their Rule, in

the Quire, Meditation, and in other acts of the Communitie.

6. Whether the divine Office be duely, and devoutly performed.

7. Whether they obserue the abstinenees, fasts, and silence prescribed vnto them by their Rule and statutes.

8. Whether the Constitutions, Ceremonies, Decrees, and Ordinances of Superiours be duely observed.

9. Whether the Superiours being in health, and not lawfully hindred, doe follow the Communitie in all things.

10. Whether they giue good example, keepe Chapter, at least once a weeke, & charitably helpe their subiects; both in temporall and spirituall necessities.

11. Whether they haue due care of the sicke, and doe prouide

for

for the neceſſities of the Communitie.

12. Whether all the Officers of the houſe doe performe their duty as it becomes them.

13. Whether the Novices, and yong Siſters are wel inſtructed.

14. Whether Encloſure be well obſerved. And ſuch like.

Where note that after the Viſit is paſſed, none ought to meddle with any fault corrected, nor make inquirie of thoſe who did accuſe them, or haue any ſuſpition of any one; but with peace and charitie ſeeke to amend that wherof they haue bene admoniſhed, and humbly accept of any Penance enioyned for the loue of God.

QVEST.

QVEST. V.

To what end Correction is vsed in Religion?

SVperiours ought to correct their subiects, with the zeale of charitie either for the amendment of those who are corrected; or for the good of others, or to prevent future evils; or for the quiet of the Communitie and so every good religious persō, ought to iudge of their Superiours vnlesse it manifestly appeare to the contrary. And so they ought willingly to vnder goe whatsoever Penance, or correction they shall inioyne them, for all is for their good.

Besides many are the reasons, which should moue Religious principally to submit themselues

to

to correction: B. Humbert in his *Speculum Religiosorum*: will giue vs 4. reasons: the 1. Because corrigibilitie doth distinguish an evill man, from a diuell: for an evill man whilst he is in this world is susceptible of correction: and the diuell is not: whence the wiseman saith Eccl. 21. *He that hateth chastisement, is the trace of a sinner.* As the trace is like to the foot, so he that hateth correction is very like to the diuell, who by excesse is callep a sinner.

2. Correction is conv enient for this place, where we are: for in heaven there is no correction, because there is no corruption of sinne. In Hell also there is no possibilitie of correction; although there be corruption of sinne. But in this vale of miserie there is both corruption of sinne, and possibilitie of correction to amend-

ment. To this end God placed mā in this world, vnder the rodde of his discipline.

3. Correction is very profitable; whence it is compared to the rodde that brought forth flowers and almonds: and therfore the wise man said Pro. 27. *Better is manifest correction, than loue hidden.* It is better that a Friend should reprehend & correct one, than by loue to dissemble & hide their faults.

4. The want of correction is very dangerous, and hurtfull; for where correctiō is wanting there corruption of sinne aboundeth. Whence the wiseman saith Pro. 15. *He that hateth reprehensions shall die.* And Eccl. 9. *He that hateth chastisement shall be diminished of life.* And againe Pro. 29. *The man that with stiffe necke contemneth him, that rebuketh: subdaine destruction*

ction shall come vpon him.

5. To beare correction patiently, is a ſigne of wiſdome; for as Salomon ſaith, *Reluke a wiſe man, and he will loue thee.* And Eccl. 10. *A man that is prudent and hath diſcipline, will not murmur being rebuked.* S. Chriſoſtome ſaith *To beare correction well, is the encomium and praiſe of no vulgar but high Philoſophie.*

Laſtly if we may belieue the ſame wiſeman, the hatred of correction or rebuke, is a figure of folly. Pro. 12. *He that hateth reprehenſions is vnwiſe, for therein he sheweth his pride*: whereby he thinkes himſelfe wiſer than others, and therfore foolishly defends his defects, and ſo ordinarily perſiſts in them. And from thence comes much trouble and diſquiet of minde.

Wherfore all true Religious

Perſons

Perſons ought with patience to receiue all corrections, rebukes, and reprehenſions: that their Superiours out of zeale of their good, shall vſe vnto them, and this not only in the Viſits of higher Superiours but alſo in the Chapters of the Abbeſſe or Superiour of the place: & becauſe we haue happened vpon Chapters, which are no other than times and places of correction, I will ſet downe ſome briefe Rules concerning Chapters, as they are collected out of Sainct Bonaventure.

First then the Religious ought greatly to honnour the Chapter, and reuerence it; as a ſchoole of mortification, giuen from heauen, and as an image of the diuine conſiſtorie or iudgement.

2. They ought to come to this Chapter, alwayes well prepared,

to

to vndergoe corrections, and penances patiently.

3. Let them accuse themselues with all submission, humbly prostrate on the ground, in a few and plaine words; and with so much cautiousnesse that they involue none but thẽselues in their faults.

4. If at any time according to their iudgement, either in the Chapter or out of the Chapter; they be reprehended, ouerseuerely or vniustly; let them not be troubled, but rather reioice in our Lord for the diligence of their Superiours (who rebuke & correct whom they loue) towards them: & for the excercise of vertue that is offered then: and let them exult greatfully at the words and pennance for Christ, and be ready humbly to beare them.

5. Let thẽ affect to be corrected, & taught of all, for he that will

not

not be corrected, will not amend: they shall be admonished willingly and reprehended patiently.

6. Let thē by noe meanes defēd, or excuſe their fault, for the fault which is defēded is doubled. Our holy Father ſaid. *Bleſſed is the ſervant who is not haſty to excuſe himſelfe, & doth humbly ſuſtaine ſhame and reprehenſion where he hath committed no fault.*

7. Let them never ſpeake in Chapter, but for two cauſes: to wit, in briefly ſpeaking their faults; and humbly anſwering to the demands of the Superiour.

Let theſe ſuffice for the preſent, as ſerving both for the Chapters in the viſits, as alſo their ordinarie Chapters which the immediate Superiour doth weekely keepe.

QVEST.

QVEST. VI.

What is to be done with the Incorrigible?

LEt none thinke it ſtrange that here in this Rule mention is made of expulſion: ſince as Navarre ſaith. *S. Auguſtine S. Benedict S. Bernard S. Dominicke and S. Francis did eſteeme this neceſſarie for the conſervation of Religion, which notwithſtanding is not to be done upon light occaſions, but only when there is no other remedie.* Which only hath place in thoſe who are incorrigible, and vncapable of correction. As thoſe who having bene corrected, and punished three times, all convenient meanes having bene vſed to with draw them from ſuch hainous crimes; are yet ſo obſtinate; that

that they will not amend, nor ſubmit themſelues to the iudgement of their Superiours: for in ſuch caſe they may be expelled, out of the Monaſterie, nay according to S. Hierome the Superiour ought to expell them. *Heli* ſaith he *did indeed correct his ſonnes, notwithſtanding he was punished of God; he ought not only to rebuke them; but caſt them forth.* S. Baſill is of the ſame opinion, proving it by the words of our Saviour Mat. 5. *If thy right eie ſcandaliſe thee, plucke it out and caſt it from thee: although thy ſubiects be as deare vnto thee as thy right eie, yet if they giue ſcandall; and hinder the good of others without hope of amendement; plucke them out, and caſt them from thee leaſt they infect the reſt.*

But this expulſion, as S. Bonaventure teacheth, doth require three conditions. 1. That their faults

faults be notorious and publickly knowne aſwell to the Religious as to Seculars. 2. That the Religious by their example may be infected and corrupted and Seculars ſcandalized. 3. That they be incorrigible; that is (as hath bene ſaid before) they haue bene conuicted of the ſame crime, three ſeuerall times; and alſo punished for them; and yet will not amend, nor giue any hopes of amendment. And according to this the clauſe in the Rule is to be vnderſtood.

Notwithſtanding all this the Seraphicall Doctour doth not iudge it expedient that any one should be expelled from Religion, which in encloſed Religious women is generally to be obſerued, & therfore it ſeemes to me; that this point of the Rule hath no place in thoſe who are encloſed

sed: because it might minister many occasions of scandale to the world; and therfore if any such thing should happen (as seldome once in an hundred yeares any such occurre) they may be better shut vp in some private place; separated from the Communitie, aswell to terrifie others, as also to avoyd the evill which they might doe to a whole Communitie. And this is declared by the Rota, as Barbosa testifieth.

If any one should wõder at such faults in regard of such who professe so much perfection. Let thẽ read Platus on this subiect. I will only set downe S. August. words which are sufficient to answere any one in this kind. *How vigilant soever the discipline of my house is: I am a mãn, and I liue amongst men, nether dare I arrogate to my*

ſelfe, that my houſe is better than the Arke of Noe, where notwithſtanding one was found to be a reprobate. Or better than the houſe of Abraham where it was ſaid: caſt forth the hand-maid and her ſonne: or better than the houſe of Iſaac, to whoſe twe twinnes it was ſaid, I haue loued Iacob, I haue hated Eſau: or better than the houſe of Iacob himſelfe, where the ſonne defiled his Fathers bed. Or better than the houſe of Dauid where one ſonne abuſed his Siſter, and the other rebelled againſt the meeknesſe of ſo holy a Father. Or better than the habitation of S. Paule, who if he had liued amongſt thoſe who were all good, would not haue ſaid, that he had without combats, within, feares: neither would he haue ſaid, when he did ſpeake of the ſanctitie and faith of Timothy: I haue no man that with ſincere affection is carefull of you, all ſeeke the things

that

that are their owne, not the things which are of Ieſus Chriſt. Or better than the cohabitation of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, wherein the eleuen good diſciples did tollerate the perfidious theefe Iudas. Or laſtly better than heauen from whence the Angels did fall. But ſimply I confeſſe to your charitie before our Lord God, who is witneſſe ouer my ſoule, that ſince I began to ſerue God, as hardly I haue found better than thoſe who haue made their progreſſe in Monaſteries, ſo I neuer experienced worſe than thoſe who haue fallen in Monaſteries: ſo that from hence I thinke it is written in the Apocalipſe: The Iuſt ſhall become more Iuſt, and the defiled may be yet more defiled. Wherfore although we be made ſadde for ſome filt cleanſed out, yet we may alſo reioyce for very many ornaments. God doth permit ſome to fall that others may be more carefull of

themſelues, and not preſume vpon our ſtate or Profeſſion, but on his infinite goodneſſe. Whilſt we are in this world there is no ſecuritie; and conſequently to expect that all ſhould be perfect, euen in the moſt Religious cloiſters, were to make earth no more earth but heauen.

CHAP. IX.

Of prayer for the dead Brothers and Siſters.

WHen any Brother or Siſter ſhall depart this world, the Miniſter, or Mother, ſhall take care that their exequies be ſolemne-

ly

ly celebrated; where at all the Brothers or Sisters of the Monasterie, where they shall happen to dye; ought personally to be present: & not to depart vntil the body be put into the Graue. And for the soule of every one that is dead, within eight dayes, every Priest shalbe boũd to say one Masse. And those who are not Priests, and can say the Psalter, shall say fiftie Psalmes. But those who cannot say the Psalter, shall say fiftie *Pater Nosters*. And at the end of every one, *Requiem æternam* &c.

And at the end of every yeare, or with in the yeare:

every Prieſt ought to ſay three Maſſes for the dead. Thoſe that can ſay the Pſalter, ſhall ſay the whole Pſalter: But thoſe who cannot ſay it: ſhall ſay a hundred *Pater Noſters*, with *Requiem æternam* at the end of every one. And concerning theſe duties of the dead, and other divine offices here ordayned; the care and charge is impoſed on the Miniſters or Mothers, that they be faithfully performed.

EXPOSITION.

WE ſhall not neede, to repeat what hath bene often ſaid, concerning this Rule, being ordayned aſwell for men as women; and therfore

therfore it will ſuffice, to ſet downe what belongs to Religious Women, who are encloſed.

1. There is a command giuen to the Abbeſſe, that she carefully ſee the exequies, or funerall rites, of any Siſter that dieth vnder her charge, to be duely performed.

2. There is a command, that all the Religious be perſonally preſent at ſuch exequies or funerall rites, vntill they be done: which is to be vnderſtood, vnleſſe with leaue of the Superiour, vpon iuſt occaſion they be hindred.

3. Euery Quire Siſter, within eight dayes after the death of any Siſter, shall ſay fiftie Pſalmes.

4. The weake Siſters, as alſo thoſe who cannot well read the Pſalmes, and the lay Siſters, are to ſay fiftie Pater Noſters, with Requiem æternam, at the end of each one.

5. Once euery yeare, the Quire Si-

 A declaration of the third

sisters are to say the Whole Psalter for the dead; and the others a hundred Pater Nosters *with* Requiem *as before. Which in my iudgement is to be vnderstood also of the Psalmes, that is that when the Sisters say the Psalmes, they are to say* Requiē æternam *at the end of each Psalme, insteed of* Gloria Patri.

Lastly a charge is laid vpon the Abbesse, to see these things performed. I will only speake of two things, to wit of the charge which Superiours haue to see both exequies, and prayers for the dead Sisters performed, and how the Sisters are to helpe the dead, with their prayers.

QVEST.

QVEST. I.

What the Superiours are obliged to in this Chapter?

AS our holy Father, in the 7. Chapter of this Rule hath given the Superiours charge, to visit the sicke, and to provide all things necessary for them, both spiritually and corporally: so here in this Chapter he hath prescribed, as it were two commands vnto them, the one is to take speciall care, that they be religiously buried, according to the vsuall custome of the Order. And the other is that they helpe and assist their soules, by seeing those prayers said which are ordayned by the Rule. How reasonable a command this is, may easily be gathered by what hath bene said be-

fore cõcerning the obligation of the Superiour to provide for the ſicke, here I will adde a little more.

The Patriarke Iob is highly commended in the holy Scripture, for the care, that he had of his children, when riſing vp early in the morning, he offered Sacrifice for every one, leaſt perhaps they should haue ſinned, and offended God; for it is the dutie of Parents to haue care of their children, aſwell for temporall neceſſities, as ſpirituall: and he should be condemned of great cruelty, & vnnaturall diſpoſition, that should ſuffer his children to lye in miſerie; when it lyeth in his power to helpe them: and the tender heart of a Mother, cannot know her childs torments, but with ſpeed she haſtens to procure his libertie: and shall Religious Su-

periours

periours, who are as Fathers, and Mothers, in a greater bound, and obligation; that is in Christ Iesus, neglect to helpe their children, in their extreameſt neceſſitie?

Let them not thinke, that it is ſufficient for them, that in themſelues they are vertuous, much given to mortificarion, or humilitie, or ſuch like, if they want the mantell of charitie, all is nought: and ſurely if they haue the leaſt ſparkle of charitie, they cannot but haue a tender compaſſion, & feeling of the neceſſities of thoſe, who are or haue bene committed to their charge. O what hardneſſe of heart, were it to depriue thoſe good ſoules, of one of the greateſt benefits of Religion: to wit of the helpe and aſſiſtance, that each Religious ought to giue to other! The Superiours doe depriue them of it, when they

doe not performe that for them, which the Rule requires of them; farre be it from the mind of all good Superiours, who ought dayly and hourely to offer Sacrifices of prayer for them, and assist them, in all necessities; especially when they cannot helpe themselues. O then they are to shew their tender hearts, & like louing Mothers to seeke all meanes to helpe them, even in iustice; for they for the loue of God haue depriued themselues, of all temporall meanes; whereby they might haue holpen themselues, in this time of necessitie: and therfore it would seeme a tyranny, or cruelie, to depriue them of those pirituall helpes which Religion doth aford them.

QVEST.

QVEST. II.

What the Sisters are to doe for those who are dead?

OVr holy Father in this Chapter, hath ordayned that all the Sisters should be present, at the exequies, and also offer particular prayers for their dead Sisters, both being necessarie for the observance of mutuall charitie, according to the common maxime what you would haue that others should doe to you, doe you also to others; shew charitie and you shall find charitie; be present, assist and helpe at the exequies of others, that also you may find the like charitie from others. Remember that the time will come, when you shalbe in the same case, you cannot looke

vpon

vpon the hearſe, but that you muſt call to mind, that ſaying *Mihi heri tibi hodie.* What neceſſitie that Siſter is in now, you may be in ere long, and on the contrarie; what honour you doe now shew to the dead, will be done to you. Moreouer to be preſent, at ſuch funerall rites, is an efficacious meanes to keepe vs from ſinne; for it puts vs in mind of our end, and as it were by a trumpet, ſummous vs to prepare our ſelues. Laſtly we can hardly doe any act, that is more meritorious, for firſt it is an act of mercy, and that none of the leaſt, for if it be good to helpe thoſe who ate in corporall neceſſities, and miſerie; ſure it is better to helpe them who are in ſpirituall affliction and torment eſpecially when no torment in this world may be compared to that of Purgatorie. Se-

condly

condly what is done to theſe ſoules, can never be loſt: for ſuch is their charitie, that they will never be vnmindfull of thoſe, that pray for them: and when it ſhall pleaſe God, to deliver them from their paines; they will ſuperabundantly requite it. Laſtly what more excellent act than this, which doth helpe to people heaven?

But I preſume that it is ſuperfluous, to vrge this any farther; becauſe I ſpeake to ſuch, whoſe tender hearts cannot beare the leaſt cruelty; but are ready to bleed, when they ſee any in diſtreſſe: whoſe paſſionate affections cannot chooſe, but commiſerate and take compaſſion of them, when they intellectually heare, that dolefull voice, *Miſeremini mei, miſeremini mei, ſaltem vos amici mei.* Haue mercy on me,

haue

haue mercy on me, at leaſt you my friends, (ye my deare Siſters) becauſe the hand of our Lord hath touched me.

For the helpe of ſuch poore ſoules, I will briefely ſet downe ſome peculiar meanes, whereby the devout Religious may shew their charitie towards them.

1. They may procure as many Maſſes as they can for them; or at leaſt heare Maſſe for that intention; and if they pleaſe, they may vſe that forme which I haue ſet downe, in the booke of the Chord. As alſo they may communicate for them; all which no doubt are very profitable to the ſoules departed.

2. They being of a more compaſſionate nature, & more prone to teares, may make an oblation of their griefe, and teares to God, who will accept this voluntary

Sacrifice;

Sacrifice; and in like manner they may offer vp all their ſuffe-rances, of what ſort ſoever; if they be accepted willingly for the loue of God, and for the good of thoſe ſoules.

3. They may offer vp their almoſt continuall faſt, to the ſame intention; and if with diſcretion, they adde ſome thing more; no doubt but they shall helpe thoſe poore ſoules, who cannot helpe themſelues; and who now perhaps do wish that they had faſted all dayes of their life in bread and water; that they might avoided thoſe intollerable paines, which they continually ſuffer.

4. They may offer vp their devotions, or diuine office, night & day for this end, aſſuring themſelues, that God will receiue their prayers, & giue comfort to thoſe impriſoned ſoules.

5. They

5. They may offer vp their watchings, when in the midnight they riſe to Mattins, the darkeneſſe of the time, may put them in minde of the obſcuritie, thoſe poore ſoules are in. When in ſommer they are oppreſſed with heat, & in winter with extreame cold, they may thinke vpon the exceſſeiue extreames of heat and cold, which they ſuffer. They shall doe well to let them be partaker of all their labours, and watchings.

Laſtly they ought to be carefull to performe, not only the prayers which are ſet downe in the Rule; but alſo thoſe which are put downe in their ſtatutes; and what pions cuſtome hath brought amongſt them, if they doe not adde, let them diminish nothing of that which common charitie requires. O who could

ſee

see a poore child lie in the fire burning, and would not helpe him! who can see his neighbours house on fire, and will not goe to quench it! much lesse can any tender heart consider the soules departed, to be in such intollerable paines, and overwhelmed with fire, and not helpe them. O devout soules neuer cease to pray for them.

CHAP. X.

Of the Obligation of this Rule.

ALl the things contained in this Rule are counsells, for the more easy conducting of soules, to the fruition

fruition of the eternall good: not having any thing that obligeth vnder mortall or veniall ſinne: vnleſſe they be otherwiſe obliged, by divine or humane law. Nevertheleſſe the Brothers or Siſters, are obliged to accomplish the Penances impoſed by Superiours; when it shalbe required of them. They are alſo obliged to the three eſſentiall vowes, to wit of Povertie, not having any thing in particular: of Chaſtitie, becauſe after their vow, they cannot contract matrimonie, nor without tranſgreſſion of their vow, defile themſelues with the

workes

workes of the flesh: and of Obedience, cõcerning those things without which this Religion cannot be maintained. And as for Nunnes they are bound to keepe encloſure, eſpecially thoſe, who haue vowed to keepe it. Which we grant to all, & every Monaſterie; provided that the hoſpitalitie and charitie, which they are accuſtomed to excerciſe towards the ſicke, with reputation, doe ſuffer no detriment.

Given at Rome at Saint Peters, vnder the fishers ring, the 20. of Ianuarie 1521. in the 8. yeare of our Papacy.

EXPOSI-

EXPOSITION.

IN this Chapter is contained a generall declaration of the Rule, to wit.

1. That all things, which are contained in this Rule are but evangelicall counsels, and meanes for the obtayning of perfection; no way, by vertue of the Rule, obliging either vnder mortall or veniall sinne.

From whence the Pope excepts first all such things wherto the Religious may be obliged, either mortally or venially; by any divine or humaine law: wherto they are obliged as all other Christians are.

2. He excepts that of doing Penance enioyned by Superiours.

3. He excepts the obligation which followes the three Essentiall vowes of Povertie, Chastitie, and Obedience. Wherto they are obliged as all other

other Religious.

4. He excepts Nunnes or Religious women who haue vowed enclosure, wherto they are obliged, as all enclosed Nunnes are.

5. The Popes holynesse well considering that there were some Religious women of this Order who kept hospitals, or serued the sicke, or that did liue otherwise without enclosure, would not command them to keepe enclosure, but doth grant them that fauour if they desire it, and that they can doe it without preiudice to the places where they liue; or wrong to the founders of such places. But as I haue in the first Part of this Booke shewen, the diuerse branches of this Order; so in this Part I intended this worke, for those Religious which are enclosed; and therfore I neede not speake any more of this last, but of the other in order.

QVEST.

QVESTION I.

Why the Pope would have all things in the Rule to be but Counsells?

WIth good reason the Pope hath added this clause, for our Saviour affirmeth, Mat. 11. *That his yoake is sweet and his burden light*: and the interpreters on this place doe say. The law of Christ Iesus is sweet, pleasant and benigne, in comparison of the old law, because it hath fewer and more easy commandements; and gives greater grace, which doth alleviate the burden of precepts; for in it God would rather governe vs by loue, than by feare; as children not as servants; alluring vs ther-vnto, not so much by threats and menaces, as by sweetnesse

ſweetneſſe and promiſe of eternall reward: whence S. Ambroſe ſaith, *It doth bind the necke with bands: but couples the minds with grace. It doth not conſtraine by neceſsitie, but directeth the will to the good worke.* And S. Aug. *They labour in the precepts of God, who endeavour to fullfill them by feare: but perfect charitie ſends forth all feare, and maketh the burden of the precept light, not only not weighing downe with the burden of its weight, but alſo raiſing vp, inſteed of wings.*

I will not enter into diſputation whether it be of greater perfection to haue a Rule which obligeth vnder mortall ſinne, or which is only of counſells; only I know, that the law of Christ Ieſus is ſweet, and rather to be obſerved by loue, than by obligation; Now this loue ſometimes may be ſo fervent, that it may

adde a vow, to the performance of that which otherwiſe were only by way of Counſell. And the common opiniõ of all Divines is, that any pious act downe by vertue of a vow, is more meritorious, than the ſame act done without it; becauſe by the vow it is elevated to a more noble degree of moralitie, for that the act is done with a more reſolute firme and ſtable election; bearing with it a voluntarie neceſſitie, freely accepted in vertue of the paſſed Vow: which as S. Thomas ſaith doth no way diminish the prayſe of a good act, but rather encreaſeth it; for by the vow, the will doth more intenſely tend to that act of vertue. Whence all Religious, doe make publicke Profeſſion by vow, to oblige themſelues to obſerve, & keepe ſome Rule, or manner of life; accor-

ding

ding to the intention of the founder, or approver of the Rule, or manner of life; where in commonly there is no obligation vnder ſinne; for few Orders beſides the Frier Minors, and the Carthuſians, are obliged vnder ſinne by vertue of their Rule, to any other thing but to their eſſentiall vowes. True it is that in former times, the poore Clares had many precepts obliging but now they are all reduced to the 4. vowes of Obedience, Povertie, Chaſtitie, and encloſure. Others adde the election and depoſition of the Abbeſſes, to haue force of a Precept, obliging alſo by vertue of the Rule. And in the ſame manner the Religious of this third Order are bound, to the foure vowes, and to doe the Penances which shall be enioyned them. In all other things by vertue of

the Rule they haue no obligation vnder ſinne, and they are only added for the better gouernement & eſtablishment of their liues, in the courſe they haue vndertaken.

From hence we may not inferre, that any one may neglect the performance of thoſe things, which the Rule preſcribeth; for that were to goe backe from their promiſed Faith, given to almighty God in their Profeſſion, which as through loue and ſincere intention they haue made to God; ſo in all puritie and ſimplicitie; by force of the ſame loue, they are to obſerved it. Truely it were more than vnbeſeeming Religious perſons, to omit willfully any thing that belongs to their ſtate, vnder pretenſe that it is no ſinne: nay it is very dangerous: witneſſe S. Laurence of venice. *It doth not be-*

long

long to the ſervants of God, only to beware great ſinnes (for this belongs to ſecular men) but alſo to shunne little things, leaſt charitie grow cold. And the wiſeman Eccl. 19. He that contemneth ſmall things, shall fall by little & little. Whence Saint Hierome ſaith. The mind that is dedicated to Chriſt, is intent aſwell to litile things as to great; knowing alſo that he muſt give account for every idle word. And S. Gregorie affirmeth that If we neglect to take care of little things, we shall inſenſibly and boldly commit greater. And S. Bernard. The mind conſecrated to God, doth as much beware leſſer vice as greater; for he that begins with little things shall eaſily fall into greater. S. Anſelme ſaith. In the Monaſteric, where the leaſt things are ſtrictly kept, there the vigour of the Religious remaines inviolable; there is peace amongſt the

Brethren, and clamors doe ceaſe in the Chapter. But where the leſt defects are neglected, there-by little, and little, the whole Order is diſſipated, and deſtroyde. And the reaſon is, becauſe as many acts of humilitie doe engender the habit of humilitie; ſo many negligent and tepide acts, do produce a habit conformable. Many little acts of vaine glory, doe leaue a cuſtome of vanitie; which eaſily diſpoſeth to greater pride. From too much ſpeech, often times proceedeth an ill habit of lying, and detraction; from neglect of counſailes, many times followes the breach of precepts: and at laſt many ſcandals.

Neither is it wonder, for by willfully giving way to ſuch little defects, they diminish grace; yea in a manner make themſelues vnworthy of Gods grace: wherfore farre be it from any Religious

gious ſoule, that tepide and deteſtable ſaying, *There is no obligation, and therfore it is no matter what we doe*: this doth not become a child & diſciple of Chriſt Ieſus. Whence S. Baſill ſaid. *What ſonne is he who ſetting before him the grace of his Father, when he obeyes him in greater things: will offend him, in thoſe which are of lighter moment?* And S. Bernard *Let none ſay in their heart, theſe are light things, I doe not care to amend them, it is not much if I remaine in theſe veniall and little ſinnes: for this, (my well beloved) is impenitence, this is blaſphemie againſt the holy Ghoſt, this is irremiſſible blaſphemie.*

Wherfore let none who profeſſeth a Religious life, and deſireth perfection; omit to obſerve counſaile or precept, but in one as in the other, ſeeke to make

their ſoules pleaſing to the divine Majeſtie. It is too too ſervile a thought for ſuch noble reſolutions to be only carefull to obſerve what is vnder obligation. A free and louing ſacrifice of our liues, is expected at our hands: let vs walke conformably; leaſt God depriue vs of his grace. We will doe nothing but what we are obliged to, and can we expect the infinite grace of God, who is no way obliged to give it vs, but out of his immenſe ineffable and infinite loue, he imparts it vnto vs? O let vs then ſerve him in loue & performe his will by loue!

QVEST.

QVEST. II.

Whether the Religious of this Order are bound to any thing of their Rule by divine or humane law?

THe Popes Holyneſſe had good reaſon, to put downe this clauſe, *vnleſſe they be otherwiſe obliged by divine or humaine law*: fot firſt by divine law, and by vertue of their vow; they are bound not to doe any thing, againſt their Rule out of cõtempt: now he is ſaid to doe out of contempt, who doth doe any thing againſt it, becauſe he will not be ſubiect to the Rule, or doth doe any thing for that end, that he might ſhew himſelfe not to eſteeme of his Rule, or manner of life: which is directly to con-

tradict what by his Profession he hath vowed to God.

2. It is a common opinion of all Diuines, that every Religious is bound vnder mortall sinne, not to recall their minde from the study of perfection; or to haue a contrary will to it: for allthough Religious are not bound to be perfect, yet they are bound to tend to perfection, which is the principall scope of a Religious life.

3. It is certaine that all Religious are obliged vnder mortall or veniall sinne, (according to the greatnesse or littlenesse of the iniurie, which is supposed;) to most things contayned in the first Chapter of the Rule, as for example: If any one should wittingly receiue or procure to be received, an Heretick, or such like: to the detriment and dammage, either spirituall,

ſpitituall, or temporall of the Communitie. Moreover I would hardly excuſe, the Superiours who should omit to examine thoſe who are to be receiued vnleſſe they haue a probable knowledge of their fitneſſe for Religion; for this may not only come to the hurt of Religion, ſcandall of the world, wrong to the party receiued; but alſo is expreſſely againſt the command of diverſe Popes.

4. The like may be ſaid of thoſe things, which are contained in the ſecõd Chapter, wherein there may be many offences committed, in giving votes, or Suffrages for ſuch as are manifeſtly vncapable or altogether vnfitting for Religion; or malitiouſly denying their votes, to thoſe who are worthy and capable to be admitted. As alſo by admitting any one to

Profeſſion, with a malitious intention, before they haue made a whole yeares triall; which is directly contrary to the commandement of the Church. In like manner, according to the ſcandale that Religious Perſons may give in going without their habit, they may offend mortally, or venially. Of thoſe things which are contained in their vowes, we ſhall ſpeake in the following Queſtions.

5. In the 4. Chapter that concerning the divine Office, according to the more probable opinion; is of obligation, by reaſon of the receiued cuſtome in all Religious Perſons; and ſome are of opinion that there is the ſame reaſons in their Faſts; eſpecially if it be with ſcandale, or in a notable manner.

6. In the fift Chapter there are

many

many things concerning the Election, that may be mortall or veniall ſinne, as for example wittingly and deliberately to chooſe any one for Abbeſſe that is no way capable of it: or through malice or by ſubornation, after a notable manner, to reiect thoſe who are capable.

7. In the ſixth Chapter mention is made of lying, and ſwearing; which many times become mortall crimes.

8. In the ſeauenth Chapter, that concerning the care and charge of the ſicke, may according to the neglect be a mortall or veniall ſinne: as being contrarie to charitie: for as a naturall Mother is bound in charitie to helpe her child, a maſter his ſeruant, a huſband his wife; ſo the Superiours are bound to take care of their ſicke Sisters.

9. In

9. In the eighth Chapter the Religious may offend, by vnlawfully refusing of their Visitours. By malitiously declaring false things of the Communitie, or against any one of the Sisters: as also by willfully concealing, such notable faults, as may turne to the preiudice and dammage of the Communitie.

10. The Superiours, according to the neglect of the soules departed, may offend against charitie, in permitting them to suffer such torments, when it belongs to them to helpe it.

From what hath bene said, we may gather that although that by vertue of the Rule; in precise termes, according to the Popes Declaration, they are not obliged vnder sinne, to any of these: yet by the law of God, or of the Church; many things do fall vn-

der

der obligation, which would require a longer relation; but that I haue partly declared it in the Queſtions on each Chapter; and iudge it more expedient to omit here vntill ſome other occaſion, preſents it ſelfe.

QVEST. III.

To what things the Religious are obliged by vertue of their Rule?

IN anſwere to this Queſtion: we may put this generall Concluſion. The Religious of this Order are bound to no more things by vertue of their Rule, than what the Pope hath ſet downe in this laſt Chapter of their Rule: or, which is the ſame; than thoſe which are expreſſely ſet downe, in the forme of their Profeſſion:

Profeſſion: to wit Obedience, Povertie, Chaſtitie, and encloſure. For that of doing Penance, for their trãſgreſſions when it shalbe required of them by their Superiours, I range vnder that of Obedience. In this Queſtion I will ſpeake of the three firſt, and of Encloſure in the next, becauſe there are many difficulties in it.

By the vow therfore of Obedience, every Religious perſon, is bound to obey his lawfull Superiours, in all things, which they shall command according to their Rule, and Inſtitution. For in rigour, the Superiour cannot command any thing, but what is in the Rule; or may conduce to the better obſervance of the Rule: ſo that they cannot command any thing aboue the Rule, or vnder the Rule: for as S. Bernard ſaith. *Let not the command or prohibition*

of

of the Prelate passe the bounds of my Profession, he can neither extend it more, nor contract it vnder. The Prelate may not prohibite any thing which I haue promised, nor exact more than I haue promised. He may not augment my vowes, without my will, nor diminish them without necessitie. And the reason is; because the Superiour is the keeper of the Rule, and institute, and not author; and power is given to him or her, that he or shee, may make their subiect perfect, according to the Rule. To this we may adde, that the Superiour cannot command any thing contrary to the Rule; but well they may dispense vpon iust occasions, and particular times, in things that are left to their power; and vpon iust causes may command their subjects, to doe something contrary to their Rule: as for example: the

Superiour

Superiour may command them to leaue their office, not to faſt, or ſuch like; when shee shall find it preiudiciall to their health, either corporall or ſpirituall. And the ſubiects are to ſtand to their iudgements, vnleſſe they manifeſtly ſee, that the Superiour doth erre in her commands.

The Religious of this Order are moreover obliged by vertue of their Rule to obey their Superiours, not only in the things which are expreſſely contained in the Rule; but alſo in thoſe things, which are contained in their ſtatutes, although in themſelues they doe not oblige vnder ſinne; becauſe the Statutes ſeemes to be included in the Rule, (which for as much as I haue ſeene is peculiar to this Rule) for in the fourth Chapter concerning Confeſſion and Communion they are to fol-

low

low the Statutes, ordayned by Superiours: and in the fifth Chapter: concernig the Election of officers, they are to obſerve their Statutes. Moreover they are bound by expreſſe words of the Rule and vow, to obey their Superiours; when they shall enioine them any Penance, for their faults which they shall commit againſt this Rule, which alſo is peculiar to this Rule for although in all Orders the Superiours haue iuriſdiction and authoritie, to punish delinquents, yet there is no obligation to petforme ſuch punishments, by vertue of the Rule.

The Religious therfore of this Order, may offend mortally, by diſobeyng their Superiours, in things contayned in the Rule: in their Statutes in Penances enioyned, when wittingly and without ſufficient cauſe, they will not obey

obey their Superiours, in matters of importance; that is in things which concerne the notable hurt, or good to the Communitie, or Religion; for in light matters, the disobedience is but a veniall sinne, vnlesse they refuse to obey in contempt of their Superiours, which cannot be excused from mortall sinne.

By the Vow of Chastitie they are bound to abstaine from Marriage, which is altogether invalide, by their solemne vowes: as also from all interne or externe act, which is contrary to chastitie, which in Relgious persons is sacrilege, and to be punished in a more severe manner if it be publique; for this crime is so odious that even according to the ciuil law, he that should rauish sollicite or corrupt a Religious woman enclosed, was to loose his head,

head, if he were a ſecular man, to be degraded and put into perpetuall priſon, if he were Eccleſiaſticall; and ſuch a Religious woman is to be put into priſon during her life. And by the Canon law they are excommunicated.

For the conſervation of this chaſtitie and avoiding of many dangers herein, the Church hath ordained very ſtrict lawes of of encloſure; of which we ſhall ſpeake in the next Queſtion.

By the vow of Povertie; they are bound not to haue, poſſeſſe or vſe any thing, as proper to themſelues; that is with intention to keepe it, as there owne independently of their Superiours.

2. They muſt be prepared to leaue the poſſeſſion, and vſe of any thing, at the Superiours will.

3. They cannot give, alienate diſtribute,

distribute, lend, or keepe any thing without leaue of Superiours.

4. They cannot take receiue or borrow any thing, without the Superiours consent.

5. They may not hide any thing, with intention to keepe it for their owne vse, and not to submit it to the Superiours order and disposition.

6. They cannot without leaue spend, wast, or consume any thing of the Monasterie. For all these are acts of proprietie; not that these are alwayes mortall sinnes; but somtimes mortall, sometimes veniall: according to the quantitie, or valour of the thing so received, detained, kept. &c. Now to make a mortall sinne, in the act of proprietie, there is required as great a quantitie as is sufficient to make a mortall sin-

ne

ne in theft; that is to the worth of foure or fiue shillings: otherwiſe it is to be eſteemed but a veniall ſinne. And generally ſpeaking; it is lawfull for any Religious perſon to receiue, giue, change, detaine, or keepe things of ſmall value, provided that they are ready to giue it to their Superiour when they should require it, or that they probably belieue that they would conſent therto. or that there be ſome vrgent occaſion which requires it.

QVEST. IV.

Whether the Religious of this Order are bound to Encloſure?

WIthout all doubt the Religious of this Order, are bound to Encloſure, (vnleſſe they haue

haue ſome iuſt pretenſe to the contrarie,) by the generall decree of the Counſell of Trent. But thoſe who make Vow of it, in their Profeſſion, (as the Religious in our Province doe) are bound as other Religious are, by vertue of their Vow, which doth import a double prohibition: to wit that they never goe forth out of their Monaſterie, or limits aſſigned for their encloſure: & that they permit none to come in into the encloſure: both of them being not only mortall ſinnes, but alſo ſtrictly forbidden by the Church, vnder paine of excommunication: vnleſſe it be in ſome particular caſes, the principall wherof I will ſet downe here; and firſt.

Religious women, who haue vowed encloſure, may goe forth in ſix occaſions. 1. when there is an inevitable, and dangerous ne-

ceſſitie,

ceſſitie, as of fire, incurſion of the enemies, or ſuch like.

2. When they are ſent by their Superiours, to plant, build, or reforme any Monaſterie, of the ſame order.

3. When any one is ſent by their Superiour; that she may be Abbeſſe: or haue any other neceſſary office, in another Monaſterie.

4. For correction ſake, to wit when any one hath committed ſome fault, and can not well be corrected in that place.

5. When there is danger of ſome infectious diſeaſe, which may ruine the whole Communitie.

6. When they by command and authoritie of Superiours doe change their Monaſtery, or place of habitation.

In all theſe caſes the licence

of Superiours is neceſſarily required; vnleſſe there be eminent danger in delay. Thoſe who giue licence in caſes not permitted, & the Nunnes who goe forth, and thoſe who accompany thē, or receiue thē, doe incurre excommunicatiō reſerved to the Pope. And beſides the Prelates & Nūnes are depriued of their offices and dignitie and are made vncapable of them for ever after: vnleſſe they haue a diſpenſation; which the Prouinciall may give, as alſo abſolue them, vpon iuſt occaſion.

In like manner others may lawfully enter in to the places of encloſure when any ſuddaine neceſſitie requires it; as invndation, fire, falling of the houſe, or ſuch like: alſo it is lawfull for the Phiſition, Surgeon, and for worke men, when they cannot well doe their worke abrode, to deſcribe

new

new buildings, which are to be made; to vnderproppe places that are like to fall, to make vp the Encloſure; or ſuch like. The Superiour may alſo goe in to ſee theſe done: as alſo to viſit the Monaſterie, and if neede be (as that there be not a place conuenient, or that by reaſon of ſome difficulties which may ariſe amongſt the Religious) he may goe and make the election there.

Moreover it is lawfull for the Religious, to admit other Religious women, in to their Monaſterie, & lodge them as they paſſe by, in their iourney, or thoſe who vpon any iuſt occaſion, are out of encloſure of their Monaſterie.

Laſtly the Confeſſour, may at any time enter with his companion: or in caſe of neceſſitie, alone (alwayes according to the ſtatutes of our Order, with a ſurplice

and ſtole on) for to adminiſter the Sacraments, not only by way of the Viaticum: but alſo as often as by the cuſtome of Religion they are to communicate; yea as often as the ſicke Siſter ſhall with reaſon ſay, that she wants helpe of him to goe to Cõfeſſion, or Communion.

To conclude; The Religious may lawfully receiue into their Monaſteries, yong children, or maides, from 7. yeares old to 25. with the conditions, following. 1. That they be there without any ſervant, and goe not forth, vntill they intend to come no more; for if they once goe forth, they are not to come in againe. 2. That they be tied to encloſure, in ſuch mãner, as the Nunnes are. 3. That they be received with the conſent of the Abbeſſe, and Religious, and with leaue of Superiours.

riours. 4. That they may be deliuered to their Parents, as soone as they shalbe required againe. 5. If there be any vrgent necessitie, for their health or curing some disease, with leaue of Superiours, they may goe forth, and come in againe, as soone as they are cured. 6. That they goe in decent and modest apparell. 7. That none be receiued before they be 7. yeares old, nor after 25. 8. That every halfe yeare, their mony be paid before hand. 9. That they be separated from the places where the Religious are, either sleeping or working. These conditions are required by the Congregation of Cardinals: and are prudently to be obserued according to time and place.

Now as this strict enclosure of Religious women, hath bene iudged necessarie for the conserva-

vation of the perfect Chastitie, which they haue vowed: so for the avoiding of many dangers, scandals, and troubles that may arise from the over much freedome of speaking, aswell to regular as secular persons, as also from writing of letters: it hath bene ordained in all well governed Monasteries, that no Religious woman should speake alone to any one, nor write letters, without leaue of their Superiours, and this to the end, that they may aswell keepe the puritie of the minde, as of the body: for as by encloſure of their bodies, they are freed from many dangers, & scandals, wherto they are subiect, by their going forth of their Monasteries, so by avoiding private conferences, or discourses and secret letters, many occasions of evill and scandall either

ther to thẽselues, or to the whole communitie, are taken away: besides manifold distractions that necessarily doth follow them: and therfore I haue thought good here to touch these two poincts; after the example of that famous Prelate and Glorious Bishop and Cardinall S. Charles Borromęus. Who treating of Encloſure, in the first Provinciall Councell of Millane, ordained that no Religious women should speake to any one without leaue of Superiours, and that only at the commune grate, the Portresses or such whose office it is to doe it, being alwayes present: true it is that it is there also permitted that the Fathers or Brothers (in which we may include the mothers and Sisters) haue a generall leaue to speake to their daughters and Sisters: but still with the portresses, as aboue

ſaid being preſent; as it is expreſ-ly alſo declared by the firſt Pro-vinciall Councell of Aquila, ap-proved by the ſacred Congrega-tion of Cardinals. Which is alſo decreed by the canon law. c. 18. q. 2. c. 21. If it happen that any Monke would ſee his neere kins-woman, let him ſpeake to her in a few and compendious words, in the preſence of the Abbeſſe; and depart from her in a short time. In the gloſſe there is a rea-ſon giuen, becauſe thoſe who will renounce the world, and worldly things, will or ought to renounce their friends. To what end ther-fore should they ſeeke any vaine & vnprofitable diſcourſes, which rather proceeds from carnall af-fection, than the ſpirituall profit of their ſoules: which each one ought to ſeeke. And as Sanchez ſaith the Religious ſuffer no lit-

tle

tle detriment, from the frequent acceſſe of their kindred. And therfore without exception *c. Periculoſo de ſtatu Reg. in* 6. the entry or acceſſe to Nunnes, may be open to none, vnleſſe reaſonable and manifeſt occaſion requires it; & that with leaue of Superiours. And in the Councell of Cabilo Can. 6. It is forbidden that any Nunne, should ſpeake to men, but in the ſpeake houſe, and with witneſſe: which is alſo generally forbid in the ſtatutes of our Order. I omit here to mention other more ſtrict lawes, vnder Excommunication, either for cõming to Monaſteries, or ſpeaking with Religious women without leaue of higher Superiours; becauſe the contiary cuſtome hath prevailed in theſe parts, at leaſt, ſuch rigourous lawes are not here put in execution.

And no leſſe care hath bene taken, concerning writing or receiving letters, without leaue of Superiours: as may be ſeene in the fore cited Coũcell of Millane: where it is ſtrictly ordayned that no Nunne, ſhall write any letter, to any one; (vnleſſe it be to Superiours) without leaue of the Abbeſſe. Nor receiue letters frõ any one, but from Superiours, but all the letters that come, ſhalbe opened, and read by the Abbeſſe, the offenders to be punished by keeping in their celles for two months, and faſting every fryday in bread and water during that time. Which was alſo obſerued in all the ancient Religious, for S. Baſil in pænis Bre. ar. 49. hath this Rule. *If any one be found to write or receiue letters, without the knowledge of the Superiour: let him be excommunicated.* The ſame is to

be

be ſeene in the Rules of Cæſarius Iſodore, and in Caſſian: and S. Auguſtine in the 25. Chapter of his Rule did ſeverely forbid it, which is inſerted the canon law. *Cap. Non dicatis* 12. *q.* 1. And Navar affirmeth, that a Regular doth ſinne, if he receiue or giue any letters without the conſent of the Superiour.

Thus by the grace of God, haue I ended this worke: if not ſo well as others may expect, at leaſt I haue shewed my good deſire, to helpe thoſe Religious ſoules, who militate vnder the banner of Chriſt Ieſus. And for my reward, I only begge their holy prayers.

F I N I S.

Laus Deo, B. V. ac S. Franciſco.

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